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NAVIGATING NORTHUMBRIA:  
MOBILITY, ALLEGORY, AND WRITING TRAVEL  
IN EARLY MEDIEVAL NORTHUMBRIA

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# Declaration

This thesis has been composed by the undersigned student, Helen Lawson, and is the student's own work. The work has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.

Helen Lawson



# Abstract

The social fact of movement is a significant underlying feature of early medieval Northumbria, as it is for other regions and other periods. The eighth-century Anglo-Latin hagiographical tradition that centres on Bede (673-735) is not known for its articulacy concerning travel, and what is expressed might well be overlooked for its brevity. This thesis explores the relationship between allegories and symbolism, and the underlying travel-culture in prose histories and hagiographies produced in Northumbria in the early eighth century. It demonstrates the wide extent to which travel was meaningful. The range of connotations applied to movement and travel motifs demonstrate a multi-layered conceptualization of mobility, which is significant beyond the study of travel itself.

In three sections, the thesis deals first with the mobility inherent in early medieval monasticism and the related concepts that influence scholarly expectations concerning this travel. The ideas of *stabilitas* and *peregrinatio* are explored in their textual contexts. Together they highlight that monastic authors were concerned with the impact of movement on discipline and order within monastic communities. However, early medieval monasticism also provided opportunities for travel and benefitted from that movement. Mobility itself could be praised as a labour for God. The second section deals with how travel was narrated. The narrative role of sea, land, and long-distance transport provide a range of stimuli for the inclusion and exclusion of travel details. Whilst figurative allegory plays its part in explaining both the presence and absence of sea travel, other, more mundane meanings are applied to land transport. Through narratives, those who were unable to travel great distances were given the opportunity to experience mobility and places outside of their homes. The third section builds on this idea of the experience of movement, teasing out areas where a textual embodiment of travel was significant, and those where the contrasting textual experience of travel is illustrative of narrative techniques and expectations. This section also looks at the hagiographical evidence for wider experiences of mobility, outside of the travel of the hagiographical subjects themselves. It demonstrates the transformation of the devotional landscape at Lindisfarne and its meaning for the social reality of movement.

This wide-ranging exploration of the theme of mobility encourages the development of scholarship into movement, and into the connections between travel and other aspects of society.



## Lay Summary

Travel and movement are important and meaningful in early medieval Northumbria. The eighth-century Anglo-Latin narrative tradition that centres on Bede (673-735) is not known for frequently discussing travel. Only a small amount of travel is present, and this fact itself means that it often goes unnoticed. This thesis explores the relationship between allegory, the interpretation of symbols in biblical stories, which medieval authors then applied in their own narratives, and the underlying realities of travel. This thesis investigates travel in Bede's history and hagiographies, stories of saints' lives, and the hagiographies that his contemporaries produced in Northumbria in the early eighth century. Within these texts, travel could carry many different meanings. This range of connotations shows that thinking about travel provides new insight into different facets of society.

In three sections, the thesis deals first with the ideas that influence scholarship's expectations of travel and mobility. It argues that travel was more significant and more frequently practised within monasticism than has been previously recognized. *Stabilitas*, 'stability' is a core monastic vow. Traditionally it has been seen to commit monks to staying still, within their monasteries. However, in the early medieval period, it did not physically bind a monk to being static. It is a virtue, not immobility. Monastic authors, monks writing for and within religious communities, used metaphors of travel, such as *peregrinatio*, 'alienation' or 'exile' to justify a type of monastic travelling. This section highlights that, whilst monastic authors were concerned with the impact of movement on discipline and the order of the monastic community, travel and mobility were integral to monasticism and society. The second section deals with how travel was narrated. The narrative role of sea, land, and long-distance transport provide a range of stimuli for the inclusion, and exclusion, of travel details. Whilst allegory plays its part in explaining the presence of sea travel and amplifying its implied meaning in travel narratives, medieval authors did not use land transport figuratively. Authors gave various features of land transport other, socially relevant, meanings. These narratives gave the opportunity to experience mobility to those who were unable to travel far themselves. The third section focusses on the experience of mobility. It considers the textual experience of travel found in reading these narratives. These narratives also present underlying changes in the landscape that indicate the travel of more people than just the clerical elite.

This thesis' exploration of mobility is wide ranging, just like the meanings that travel can hold. It encourages further scholarship into movement, and seeks to connect interpretation of travel to other aspects of society.





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# List of Abbreviations

## Abbreviations of Titles of Medieval Texts

Citations, quotations, divisions of the text, and pagination referenced are derived from the English translation expressed in the abbreviations list unless otherwise stated. Full bibliographic information for all texts is presented in the bibliography.

DLS	Bede, <i>De locis sanctis</i> = <i>On the Holy Places</i> , ed. Fraipont; trans. Foley
DTab	Bede, <i>De tabernaculo</i> = <i>On the Tabernacle</i> , ed. Hurst; trans. Holder
DTemp	Bede, <i>De templo</i> = <i>On the Temple</i> , ed. Hurst; trans. Connolly
DTR	Bede, <i>De temporum ratione</i> = <i>The Reckoning of Time</i> , ed. Jones; trans. Wallis
EpistCath	Bede, <i>In epistolas septem catholicas</i> = <i>Commentary on the Seven Catholic Epistles</i> , ed. Hurst; trans. Hurst
ExpAct	Bede, <i>Expositio Actuum Apostolorum</i> = <i>Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles</i> , ed. Laistner; trans. Martin
ExpApoc	Bede, <i>Expositio Apocalypseos</i> = <i>Commentary on the Apocalypse</i> , ed. Gryson; trans. Wallis
HA	Bede, <i>Historia Abbatum</i> = <i>History of the Abbots</i> , ed. and trans. Grocock and Wood
HE	Bede, <i>Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum</i> = <i>Ecclesiastical History</i> , ed. and trans. Colgrave and Mynors
Hom.	Bede, <i>Homiliae euangelii</i> = <i>Homilies on the Gospels</i> , ed. Hurst; trans. Martin and Hurst
InCant	Bede, <i>In Cantica Canticorum</i> = <i>On the Song of Songs</i> , ed. Hurst; trans. Holder
InEz	Bede, <i>In Ezram et Neemiam</i> = <i>On Ezra and Nehemiah</i> , ed. Hurst; trans. DeGregorio
InGen	Bede, <i>In Genesim</i> = <i>On Genesis</i> , ed. Jones; trans. Kendall
InHab	Bede, <i>Expositio Bedae presbyteri in Canticum Habacuc</i> = <i>Commentary of Bede the Priest on the Canticle of Habakkuk</i> , ed. Hudson; trans. Connolly
InSam	Bede, <i>In primam partem Samuhelis</i> = <i>On the First book of Samuel</i> , ed. Hurst

RB	Benedict of Nursia, <i>Regula Benedicti</i> , ed. and trans. Kardong
RM	‘The Master’, <i>Regula Magistri</i> , ed. De Vogüé; trans. Eberle
VCA	<i>Vita Cuthberti</i> , ed. and trans. Colgrave
VCeol	<i>Vita Ceolfridi</i> , ed. and trans. Grocock and Wood
VCP	Bede, <i>Vita Sancti Cuthberti</i> = <i>The Life of Cuthbert</i> , ed. and trans. Colgrave
VG	<i>Vita Gregorii</i> , ed. and trans. Colgrave
<i>VIII quaest.</i>	Bede, <i>De VIII quaestionibus</i> = <i>On Eight Questions</i> , ed. Gorman; trans. Holder
VW	Stephen of Ripon, <i>Vita Wilfridi</i> , ed. and trans. Colgrave
<i>XXX quaest.</i>	Bede, <i>In Regum librum XXX quaestiones</i> = <i>Thirty Questions on the Book of Kings</i> , ed. Hurst; trans. Foley

## Other Abbreviations

CCSL	Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina
DMLBS	<i>Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources</i> , ed. Latham, Howlett and Ashdowne
eDIL	<i>Electronic Dictionary of the Irish Language</i> , ed. Toner et al.
MGH	Monumenta Germaniae Historica

For all scriptural quotations, the Jerome Vulgate is used for the Latin: Robert Weber and Roger Gryson, *Biblia Sacra Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem, Editionem Quintam* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2007). All English scriptural quotations are from the *New Revised Standard Version Bible: Anglicised Edition* (National Council of the Churches of Christ, 1989, 1995), henceforth NRSVA. When numbering differs between the two, chapter and verse references are given in the Vulgate with NRSVA in parenthesis.





## 0.1. Introduction

[Abraham] passed over temporal desires, and hastened to pass over from the present life to the joys of the world to come. For the saint was not an inhabitant of earth, but a wayfarer and a stranger, saying to his Creator, for I am a sojourner with you and a *peregrinus* as all my fathers were.<sup>1</sup>

On the merits of Abraham, Bede expressed virtues through the language of movement and estrangement; this vocabulary came to articulate the call to monasticism. Abraham, a pillar of the Christian faith, developed his relationship with God through the journey on which he was sent. He was not alone in experiencing God through movement. The people of Israel moved between their promised homeland and foreign empires, wandering and in exile. Journeys in the Old Testament were a process of theological development, deepening the Chosen People's understanding of God. In the New Testament, travel was central to developing the precepts of faith and transmitting it, expanding its world-reach.

The Judeo-Christian tradition is grounded in travel. From Abraham's exile to the Great Commission, the actors in the Bible were on the move. In contrast, Christianity is treated as a static religion.<sup>2</sup> Early medieval Christianity is no different. It is perceived as geographically immobile because assumptions of Christian fixity are not overturned by the presence of travel within textual sources. The present thesis confronts this misapprehension. Travel and mobility were features of early medieval society in

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<sup>1</sup> Bede, *In Genesim = On Genesis*, ed. C. W. Jones, *Opera Exegetica (Beda Venerabilis)* CCL 118A (Turnhout: Brepols, 1967); trans. Calvin B. Kendall, *Bede: On Genesis* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2007). Book 3, 14 [14:13], 264: *transcendebat namque desideria temporalia, et de praesenti seculo ad futura gaudia transire festinabat. Sanctus etenim habitator terrae non est sed uiator et aduena, dicens suo conditori, quoniam incola ego sum apud te in terra et peregrinus sicut omnes patres mei*. Bede quotes Psalm 38:13 (39:12) and Psalm 118:19 (119:19); after Genesis 23:4.

<sup>2</sup> This conflict of ideas drives Joerg Rieger to consider a theology of travel in *Traveling*, Compass Series (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011; repr., *Faith on the Road: A Short Theology of Travel & Justice* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press Academic, 2015)).

Northumbria, as elsewhere. There is a vast divergence between the absence of movement in the narrative tradition, which allows for society and religion to be perceived as static, and the underlying social reality. This thesis explores narrated travel to interpret its meaning and glimpse the mobile society of the early Middle Ages. By following a trail of religious and allegorical ideas, and by reading the way signs of monastic engagement with concepts of immobility, obedience, and metaphors of journeys, this thesis connects the narrative output of early medieval Northumbria with the theological context from which it emerged.

Traditionally, studies of travel have sought to examine the practicalities of movement. Whilst a worthwhile enterprise, this prioritization of travel practices isolates the study of travel, and promotes the idea that travel is only of interest for its own sake. Viewed together, the practicalities and realities of travel feed into an image of a highly mobile medieval society. From a stance of informed assumed mobility, an assortment of questions about the role of travel emerges. This thesis engages with the Mobilities paradigm, which takes the study of travel away from a functionalist narrative to place it in its broader social context. Thus, for this thesis travel's meanings are more significant than the modes of travel.

Rather than seeing the study of travel in isolation from the study of other aspects of medieval society, it should be perceived as part of the sum of society. A stoic focus on spatiality and functionality when questioning the role of movement restricts our understanding of the wider concept of travel both socially and narrationally. Travel was an inherent part of society, and its practice and meaning cannot be separated from broader questions. Travel has a range of meanings, spiritual and profane, and these

illuminate a wide range of aspects of society that are overlooked in the focussed study of the realities of the physical traveller.

This thesis makes use of the intellectual context of Bede and his contemporaries situated in the first third of the eighth century, in Northumbria. Chief amongst their narrative output are their histories and hagiographies, these contain the deliberate retelling of selected sequenced events. The present thesis sets the role of travel in these narratives within their monastic and theological framework. The intellectual milieu of these authors was not limited to their geographically proximate peers. Because of this, this thesis draws on comparisons in a wider range of sources, namely the Hiberno-Latin hagiographies of Brigit, Patrick, and Columba, and the missionary hagiographies of the later eighth-century Anglo-Saxons in Francia. These comparisons serve to demonstrate that while the social reality of mobility was universal, the expression of movement in narrative traditions and conceptual frameworks differs greatly. There is no single explanation of the role of travel within eighth-century narratives.

While travel can be explored in a wide range of ways, the nature of the available early medieval narrative sources means that this thesis interprets Anglo-Saxon concepts of mobility through monastic ideas of travel, and monastic tropes and allegories that engaged with movement. The thesis is structured in three parts. It begins with an investigation into attitudes towards travel from within the monastic milieu that produced the narrative hagiographies and histories, the underlying concepts of travel that are seen to halt or encourage the movement of monks. In this part, monastic conceptions and use of travel is explored. The second part of the thesis delves into the narrative presentation of mobility and transport, looking at the scriptural and allegorical premises for depictions of movement. Travel, seen from within this

hagiographical construction, is significant beyond its practicality. This highlights that certain types of travel could be spiritualized whilst other aspects of mobility are imbued with alternative meanings. The third part takes the conceptualization of travel explored in the initial two sections and proposes that, through this lens of meaningful travel, the scholar can engage with the experience of early medieval travel through texts.

Part 1, 'Ideas and Theologies', highlights the mobility inherent in early medieval monasticism. This is done through the exploration of attitudes to travel and movement, as well as consideration of the types of monks who travelled. First, the concept of stability is outlined. Key to Mobilities as a framework is overturning assumptions of fixity and boundedness, and for the early medieval period, that conceptual barrier is *stabilitas loci*. Crucial to a more flexible understanding of the meaningful place of travel in early medieval texts is a comprehension of the mobile nature of society. In sixth- to eighth-century Christian writings, *stabilitas* is a virtue not a concept of locative fixity: the revision of this idea is crucial to the further investigation of early medieval attitudes to travel. In particular, Bede's attitude towards travel is explored. As the most prolific eighth-century Northumbrian author with the greatest surviving textual output, Bede's works underlie this thesis' interpretation of the Northumbrian textual milieu. This explanation of the role of travel within the framework of labours and obedience through which Bede justified travel highlights the significance of mobility to early medieval monasticism as well as presenting the concepts that governed and controlled it.

The final idea under consideration in Part 1 is a particular type of monastic travel, *peregrinatio*. This discussion applies *peregrinatio* to, and explains it in, those

instances when early medieval authors used the words *peregrinus* or *peregrinatio*. Thus, this is a discussion of those who sought self-imposed exile or alienation, and were narrated to have lived away from their homeland so that they might achieve their ultimate destination, the heavenly *patria*. *Peregrinatio* later comes to mean ‘pilgrimage’, but this is not the notion under consideration. For the early medieval period, ‘pilgrimage’ is an unclear and undefined concept, not directly referred to within the narrative tradition as a particular form of travel in its own right. It is important not to impose later medieval ideas, whether that is *stabilitas loci* or *peregrinatio* as ‘pilgrimage’, onto scholarly interpretations of early medieval practices. Therefore, to maintain a separation between the *peregrinatio*-concept as it was used by early medieval authors and the aspects of devotional travel that are narrated, this thesis leaves as much material distance between this chapter and those that consider pilgrim-like behaviours. This structure pushes chapters 2.3, outlining the narration of long-distance travel to Rome, 3.1, exploring the creation of a devotional landscape on Lindisfarne, and 3.2, which interprets travel in the narration of the Holy Land, to the closing of the thesis. By this, these types of travel, which are traditionally referred to as ‘pilgrimage’, cannot easily be conflated with *peregrinatio* as alienation, as it was used in the early medieval period.

‘Narrated Travel’, Part 2, moves from the monastic framework that created the early medieval narratives to the texts themselves to demonstrate the range of significances that could be applied to travel as a narrative motif. Beginning with the example of sea-travel, this thesis highlights that an eschatological conceptualization of the sea could influence its role in miracle narratives. The figurative meaning of the sea as the turbulent earth, which God would still at the coming of the new Jerusalem, added a

layer of meaning to miracles on the sea. When God or his saints stilled the sea, and by extension when a saint experienced a calm sailing, the weight of the sea as an allegorical force added emphasis to the miracle and the sea-voyage was imbued with divine providence. The second chapter moves on to address other ways that authors permeated travel with significance that transcended an account of the practicalities. Land transport was not used as an allegorical tool in hagiographical narratives, however, travel was narrated within certain conceptual frameworks. Bede and the Northumbrian hagiographies placed an emphasis on pedestrian travel, despite various underlying suggestions that horseback travel was an increasingly important feature of clerical, and particularly episcopal, mobility. Bede invoked an apostolic image of preaching, and made walking a symbol of pastoral humility. The final chapter of Part 2 takes the example of journeys to Rome to consider the various underlying concepts that shaped the creation of a narrative journey as distinct from its travelled counterpart.

The final part of this thesis ‘The Experience of Mobility’ presents a pair of case studies that draw together some of the meanings of travel. It demonstrates the multi-faceted nature of movement within early medieval narratives. The textual experience of mobility that is teased from this pair of chapters illustrates the broader implications of considering narrated travel. It is not about the study of movement, but the underlying relevance of ideas about mobility and the wider role of mobility practices in early medieval society. The first case study demonstrates the evidence for changing devotional practices and the development of a devotional landscape for travellers at Lindisfarne. A devotional landscape implies mobility beyond the elite of the clerical class; its development and management demonstrate a facet of a more widely experienced type of mobility to and in a controlled environment. The second case study

focusses on the role of travel within Bede and Adomnán's *De Locis Sanctis*, texts that describe the devotional landscape of the Holy Land. These texts contribute to the non-literal, imaginative travel that the experience of scripture and liturgy provided. The chapter draws attention to contrasting elements in the presentation of the unfamiliar and the familiar, comparing movement around the Levant to regional travel within Britain and Ireland. The wide range of textual embodiments of mobility highlights that readers' experience of travel within early medieval narratives were diverse. This complexity of narrated travel does not draw attention away from other facets of narrative, nor does the range of experiences of mobility detract from the scope of social reality; a broad consideration of movement enhances interpretations of the early medieval past.

Early medieval society was active and mobile, and this ought to provoke a number of lines of investigation. This thesis has settled on the role of travel in narratives from a restricted eighth-century Northumbrian corpus in the hope that it might stimulate further investigations into mobility and its meaning more broadly in the medieval world. The significance of travel extends beyond its physical reality, it extends beyond the functionality of moving. Scholarship into travel, likewise, must consider more than the spatial shadow cast by past travel.





## 0.2. Literature Review

Travel tends to have been studied either from the perspective of roads and routeways, or trade and exchange. These two outlooks engage with physical, functional and spatial aspects of mobility. Mobility, however physical, is also a social phenomenon. Intangible aspects of mobility are absent from scholarship considering medieval travel. This literature review situates the concerns of the current thesis, regarding conceptualizing travel in a restricted set of literature (coming from a limited period and geographical place, that is, eighth-century Northumbria), within the broader field of study that engages with medieval travel.

The scholarship surveyed here is largely focussed on the practicalities and realities of medieval travel. This literature frames the present thesis's concern with the conceptualization of travel by presenting the way movement tends to have been studied. This background evaluation of medieval transport studies in all its forms highlights the singular nature of place and infrastructure-based studies that sit at the heart of investigations into medieval travel. This survey identifies the manners by which early medieval travel has been studied. Patterns, methods, and the makeup of travel highlight scholarship's isolated concern with routes, roads, and seaways. The organization of travel is not the sole way to engage with medieval movement. To consider the systems of travel alone, as has been the trend in scholarship, is to isolate medieval movement and travellers, to make them exceptional, and to remove travel from its wider intellectual and cultural context. This thesis contends that there is a great deal to be understood from engaging with various social and religious responses to travel, and the mediation of movement across time and through texts.

Further, by accessing a rounded picture of how the actualities of early medieval travel are conceptualized, the reader of this thesis may be less distracted from our present purpose by questions of ‘how’ and ‘why’. The available practicalities of early medieval travel need to be grasped such that narrative omissions can be understood for what they are, rather than contested as a feature of reality. Thus, this outline of literature concerned with the functional reality of past travel forms an introductory component of the thesis, so that the conceptualization of travel might not be separated from an understanding of the practicalities and organization of movement.

There was inherent mobility in the action and events that made the early Middle Ages. Although not the direct focus, this mobility can be seen from the perspectives of studies into England and Rome, missionaries in Francia, further contact with the Carolingian world, or within the Insular world.<sup>3</sup> The exchange of ideas and materials also highlights this movement.<sup>4</sup> Research highlighting particularly mobile individuals, such as Wilfrid of York or Benedict Biscop, have been further sources of information about the mobile society of the early Middle Ages.<sup>5</sup> The present survey of the scholarship chooses not to look into this. Instead, this reflexive study of early medieval

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<sup>3</sup> Francesca Tinti, *England and Rome in the Early Middle Ages: Pilgrimage, Art, and Politics*, Studies in the Early Middle Ages (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014); James T. Palmer, *Anglo-Saxons in a Frankish World, 690-900*, Studies in the Early Middle Ages (Turnhout: Brepols, 2009); Joanna Story, *Carolingian Connections: Anglo-Saxon England and Carolingian Francia, c. 750-870*, Studies in Early Medieval Britain (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002); Leslie Alcock, *The Neighbours of the Picts: Angles, Britons & Scots at War and at Home* (Rosemarkie: Groam House Museum Trust, 1993).

<sup>4</sup> Jonathan M. Wooding, “Trade as a Factor in the Transmission of Texts between Ireland and the Continent in the Sixth and Seventh Centuries”, in *Ireland and Europe in the Early Middle Ages: Texts and Transmission = Irland Und Europa Im Früheren Mittelalter: Texte Und Überlieferung*, ed. Próinséas Ní Chatháin and Michael Richter (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2002), 14-26.

<sup>5</sup> For example, see Patrick Wormald, “Bede and Benedict Biscop”, in *Famulus Christi: Essays in Commemoration of the Thirteenth Centenary of the Birth of the Venerable Bede*, ed. Gerald Bonner (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1976), 141-69; William Trent Foley, *Images of Sanctity in Eddius Stephanus’ Life of Bishop Wilfrid, an Early English Saint’s Life* (Lampeter: Edwin Mellen Press, 1992); Nicholas J. Higham, *Wilfrid, Abbot, Bishop, Saint: Papers from the 1300th Anniversary Conferences* (Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2013).

movement focusses on the means by which medieval travel can and has been actively studied.

Scholarship, and thus this chapter, has largely focussed on waterborne transport. Land routes have not been neglected entirely but there is less direct evidence for land transport, particularly that which can be dated conclusively. Comparatively, movement in the broader Insular context has been studied from different perspectives in different kingdoms, dependent on available sources and the early direction that research took. These differences greatly influence the scholarly assumptions that underlie ideas of mobility in different parts of a small geographical area.

### 0.2.1. The Oceanic Turn

The worlds of seafaring, ships, and literary production relating to the maritime world have received increased scholarly attention in recent years. This ‘oceanic turn’ appears in research into practices of seafaring, and in what seafaring and the sea meant to the medieval peoples of Britain, although the literary and archaeological outputs are rarely brought together. The key volumes in ‘oceanic turn’ scholarship are Sebastian Sobecki’s *The Sea and Englishness in the Middle Ages* and Stacy Klein, William Schipper, and Shannon Lewis-Simpson’s *The Maritime World of the Anglo-Saxons*, both of which are collaborative, multidisciplinary essay collections on the nautical experiences of people in England.<sup>6</sup>

*The Sea and Englishness in the Middle Ages* considers the interplay between medieval ideas of the sea and the establishment of an English identity. Two of its contributions

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<sup>6</sup> Sebastian I. Sobecki, *The Sea and Englishness in the Middle Ages: Maritime Narratives, Identity and Culture* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2011); Stacy S. Klein, William V. Schipper, and Shannon Lewis-Simpson, *The Maritime World of the Anglo-Saxons*, *Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies* (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2014).

consider Old English literary engagements with a maritime-focussed Anglo-Saxon identity. Winfried Rudolf identifies a sense of alone-ness and the sea as a surrounding force in Old English homilies, which may have been a part of a developing identity.<sup>7</sup> He emphasizes the spiritual significance of a range of maritime motifs of the island, the coast, and the sea. Fabienne Michelet considers the absence of a detailed narrative of the Anglo-Saxon migration: despite its importance, she considers the event to have been downplayed. Her emphasis is on the sea as a force within Anglo-Saxon narratives in the Old English *Andreas* and *Exodus*, and in the narrating of migration.<sup>8</sup> The two poems made use of the sea as an allegorical and heroic force, its crossing was salvation and a test of bravery. In narratives of Anglo-Saxon migration, the sea was downplayed; Michelet finds it intriguing that given this heroic and spiritual context for sea crossings that neither the dangers and trials nor the ancestral Anglo-Saxons' mastery of the sea were accentuated. This journey was not imagined as a quest or a test, and thus not a means of demonstrating their worthiness to claim the territory upon which they landed.

The literary presentation compared to reality is a fundamental element of 'oceanic turn' literature, as seen in *The Maritime World of the Anglo-Saxons*. A sense of the duality of the role and perception of the sea is present in both literary and archaeological explorations of the sea. A key concern in literary scholarship is the negative literary portrayal of the sea in contrast to its necessity and all-around importance, as expressed

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<sup>7</sup> Winfried Rudolf, "The Spiritual Islescape of the Anglo-Saxons", in *The Sea and Englishness in the Middle Ages: Maritime Narratives, Identity and Culture*, ed. Sebastian I. Sobecki (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2011), 31-58.

<sup>8</sup> Fabienne L. Michelet, "Lost at Sea: Nautical Travels in the Old English *Exodus*, the Old English *Andreas*, and Accounts of the *Adventus Saxonum*", in *The Sea and Englishness in the Middle Ages: Maritime Narratives, Identity and Culture*, ed. Sebastian I. Sobecki (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2011), 59-80.

for example by Juliet Mullins.<sup>9</sup> Archaeological investigations into the sea provide an alternative duality. For example, Christopher Loveluck outlines the seas with danger on the one hand and connectivity, trade, and freedom on the other.<sup>10</sup> Those who travelled on the sea and the representation of its figural and symbolic presence both made their mark across the early medieval period.

In an attempt to bring together figural and literal sea travel, Martin Carver's discussion 'Travel on the Sea and in the Mind' considers both the practicalities of sea travel and the perception of it.<sup>11</sup> He summarizes that boats had travelled on all the seas surrounding Britain from at least the Bronze Age, so any discussion of early medieval travel is one of an evolving practice, not an origin. He revisited the long-standing idea that Britain is best understood as containing two cultural communication zones. Western Britain and Ireland encompassed a cohesive maritime community that stretched from Spain to western Scotland. Those who lived on the eastern side of Britain travelled most easily in estuaries, and were involved in trade and exchange between England and Frisia.<sup>12</sup>

The Irish Sea and western Atlantic cultural zone form a north-south axis. This and the use of short-hop journeys in developing societies along the sea has long been a feature

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<sup>9</sup> Juliet Mullins, "Herimum in Mari: Anglo-Saxon Attitudes Towards Peregrinatio and the Ideal of a Desert in the Sea", in *The Maritime World of the Anglo-Saxons*, ed. Stacy S. Klein, William V. Schipper, and Shannon Lewis-Simpson, Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2014), 59-73, at 65.

<sup>10</sup> Christopher Loveluck, *Northwest Europe in the Early Middle Ages, c. AD 600-1150 a Comparative Archaeology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 179-80.

<sup>11</sup> Martin O. H. Carver, "Travels on the Sea and in the Mind", in *The Maritime World of the Anglo-Saxons*, ed. Stacy S. Klein, William V. Schipper, and Shannon Lewis-Simpson, Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2014), 21-36.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 22, 26-8.

of scholarship.<sup>13</sup> More recently, Barry Cunliffe argued that the communities along this axis, from coastal Spain and Brittany to Ireland, Wales, and western Scotland were an ideologically unified community.<sup>14</sup> Fiona Edmonds, however, disagrees with the idea that the entire coastal landscape might be understood as a single cultural zone using the example of north-west England. She argues that the coastal landscape and the dangers of the shore in north-west England may have isolated it from the Irish Sea, rather than joined it to the cultural zone.<sup>15</sup>

The North Sea cultural zone, rather than a stretched axis of commonality, is situated across the southern North Sea and the Channel. Communities in coastal regions may have had a distinct character, separated from those who lived inland. The connectivity of maritime and land communities is questioned by Christopher Loveluck and Dries Tys who note that access to marginal coastal landscapes was difficult.<sup>16</sup> This disengagement between inland and coastal communities is balanced by an affinity

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<sup>13</sup> See for example, Emrys George Bowen, *Britain and the Western Seaways*, Ancient Peoples and Places (London: Thames and Hudson, 1972), which might be considered the culmination of Bowen's studies into the western seaways since the 1930s. He particularly engaged with the spread of saints' cults across seaways. Bowen worked based on an assumption that sea-routes were important to Britain and Ireland and their history and interactions with the Continent, opposing the isolationist ideas of British and Irish cultural development. These attitudes remain central to debates about the place of travel in pre-modern society.

<sup>14</sup> Barry W. Cunliffe, *Facing the Ocean: The Atlantic and Its Peoples, 8000 BC-AD 1500* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 554-58.

<sup>15</sup> Fiona Edmonds, "Barrier or Unifying Feature? Defining the Nature of Early Medieval Water Transport in the North-West", in *Waterways and Canal-Building in Medieval England*, ed. John Blair (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 21-36, at 23. The north-west of England is absent from discussion of early medieval communication across the Irish Sea as it lacks evidence of the trade network with the Mediterranean. Edmonds notes that this absence is usually explained either by deficiencies in the region's ports, or its place as part of the kingdom of Northumbria. She considers that this can be countered by the role of north-west England in routes connecting Iona and Bernicia, which she considers would have been more favourable than the Clyde and Forth estuaries, which may have been politically closed to Northumbrian travellers. Her overall argument focusses on both the continued use of the north-west in communications between Ireland and northeastern England, and the possibility of water-transport having provided the means for those communications. However, there is no solid conclusion on the latter part, only the argument that rivers would have supported shallow boats and some transportation of goods.

<sup>16</sup> Christopher Loveluck and Dries Tys, "Coastal Societies, Exchange and Identity Along the Channel and Southern North Sea Shores of Europe, AD 600-1000", *Journal of Maritime Archaeology* 1, no. 2 (2006): 140-69, at 162.

between coastal communities on either side of the Channel and southern North Sea coasts.<sup>17</sup> Mobility and community developments that encompassed the North Sea coastal world were economically driven. Stéphane Lebecq considered Frisia and the emergence of specialized sea-faring traders from the sixth and seventh centuries, and their broader European importance.<sup>18</sup> Further, Søren Sindbæk stressed that, alongside political support, profit-motive drove long-distance traders in Scandinavia, which stimulated a hierarchy of trading places as central places.<sup>19</sup> Together, these studies demonstrate complex social and economic interactions which utilized the coasts of the North Sea. The importance of maritime connections in the formation of micro-regions is not limited to northern Europe. Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell's *The Corrupting Sea* outlined the importance of the Mediterranean in creating micro-regions both on small and larger scales that incorporated almost the whole of the Mediterranean.<sup>20</sup> They considered the Mediterranean region across the millennia, from the second millennium BC to the end of the medieval period, seeing not an unvaried continuum but constant movement, community, and exchange across the spectrum.

Ships and shipping maintained marine communities. A putative 'evolution' in ship technology sees a development from boats that were rowed, through boats that may have a sail, to those that did have a sail.<sup>21</sup> The use of replicas has been particularly

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Stéphane Lebecq, "Routes of Change: Production and Distribution in the West (5th–8th Century)", in *The Transformation of the Roman World AD 400-900*, ed. Leslie Webster and Michelle Brown (London: British Museum Press, 1997), 67-78, at 73-6. He argues that the seafaring peoples of the north became commercially driven in this period and redirected European/Frankish interest from the Mediterranean to the emerging markets in the north.

<sup>19</sup> Søren Michael Sindbæk, "Networks and Nodal Points: The Emergence of Towns in Early Viking Age Scandinavia", *Antiquity* 81 (2007): 119-32, at 128-9.

<sup>20</sup> Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), particularly see "Connectivity", 123-72.

<sup>21</sup> See for example, Sean McGrail, *Maritime Celts, Frisians and Saxons*, Council for British Archaeology Research Report (London: Council for British Archaeology, 1990); particularly Martin O. H. Carver, "Pre-Viking Traffic in the North Sea", in *Maritime Celts, Frisians and Saxons*, ed. Sean



prominent in experimental archaeological work to understand the practicalities of pre-modern sailing.<sup>22</sup> Martin Carver, outlining his personal experience with a reconstruction, discussed the flexibility of the vessels, the slowness of rowing, and the simplicity of a sail if one is travelling in the direction of the wind.<sup>23</sup> These ideas align with other accounts of using reconstructions. The ability to tack, not whether a sail could be employed, was key to using boats without a full complement of rowers. This development was probably achieved at some point between the ninth and eleventh centuries, and thus seventh- and eighth-century seafarers were reliant on oars, rowers, and the direction of the wind.<sup>24</sup>

David Petts demonstrated the importance of coastal landscapes for the location and interrelation of most of the important sites of early medieval Northumbria, except Yeavering.<sup>25</sup> The role of seaways and water transport ought, therefore, to be important. Research into sea travel within an early medieval Northumbrian context has tended towards an assessment of the time taken to travel between the north and south of

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McGrail (London: Council for British Archaeology, 1990), 117-25. Ole Crumlin-Pedersen, *Viking-Age Ships and Shipbuilding in Hedeby/Haithabu and Schleswig*, Ships and Boats of the North (Roskilde: Viking Ship Museum, 1997), 18-20. Damian M. Goodburn, "Do We Have Evidence of a Continuing Saxon Boat Building Tradition?", *International Journal of Nautical Archaeology* 15, no. 1 (1986): 39-47, at 41.

<sup>22</sup> The Viking Ship Museum in Roskilde is at the forefront of this work on northern European boats. Ole Crumlin-Pedersen was instrumental in outlining the agenda, and later guidelines for the expansion of this work in a British context, see "Experimental Archaeology and Ships - Bridging the Arts and the Sciences", *International Journal of Nautical Archaeology* 24, no. 4 (1995): 303-06; , *Archaeology and the Sea in Scandinavia and Britain. A Personal Account*, Maritime Culture of the North (Roskilde: Viking Ship Museum, 2010); Ole Crumlin-Pedersen and Seán McGrail, "Some Principles for the Reconstruction of Ancient Boat Structures", *International Journal of Nautical Archaeology* 35, no. 1 (2006): 53-57.

<sup>23</sup> Carver, "Travels on the Sea", 24; Martin O. H. Carver and Christopher Loveluck, *Original Early Medieval Period Working Group Document (Appendix 4)*, England's Maritime and Marine Historic Environment Resource Assessment and Research Agenda (Centre for Maritime Archaeology at the University of Southampton and English Heritage, 2010), 29.

<sup>24</sup> Carver, "Travels on the Sea", 25-6; Carver and Loveluck, *Working Group Document*, 30.

<sup>25</sup> David Petts, "Coastal Landscapes and Early Christianity in Anglo-Saxon Northumbria", *Estonian Journal of Archaeology* 13, no. 2 (2009): 79-95, particularly 79-80. He argued for the dual importance of the sea, both spiritually and economically.

Anglo-Saxon England. These assessments demonstrate Northumbria's connectivity with Kent and East Anglia and the superiority of water transport, particularly sailing, over land transport. Martin Carver first proposed the timings that have become established as the approximation of the time taken to travel around early medieval Britain. These are an overland pace of 15 miles per day, sea rowing at 41 miles per day, and sea sailing at 82 miles per day.<sup>26</sup> He established these speeds in the context of discussing Sutton Hoo. Thus, Carver showed that Norway, Jutland, and even the Baltic and eastern Sweden could be reached within a fortnight of good sailing from the port at Ipswich.<sup>27</sup> Christopher Ferguson and Lemont Dobson both followed this work from a Northumbrian perspective, building on Carver's structure of travel. They both looked at travel along the eastern coast of England.<sup>28</sup> With the particular intention to demonstrate the superiority of sea travel, Dobson and Ferguson both argued for the importance of the eastern coastline, and the speed and efficiency of sailing along it.<sup>29</sup> Both took the same overall approach. They both consider the time that it would have taken to travel from Bamburgh to various places within eastern Britain. Dobson based his waterborne timings directly on Carver's whereas Ferguson adapted them, choosing to express distance in hours.<sup>30</sup> The primary problem with these time-based assessments is that they remove details that influenced the duration of a journey in reality. For

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<sup>26</sup> Carver, "Pre-Viking Traffic". This is based on experimental use of replicas for the sea-vessels. However, the 15 miles a day travel overland is a single and general speed that is not based in a particular reality. It is not clear whether it is meant to represent an average, with or without load, walking or by horse. Depending on circumstances, this could be a substantial under-estimate.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 120-2.

<sup>28</sup> Lemont Dobson, "Time, Travel and Political Communities: Transportation and Travel Route in Sixth- and Seventh-Century Northumbria", *The Heroic Age* 8 (2005), accessed May 14, 2014, [www.heroicage.org/issues/8/dobson.html](http://www.heroicage.org/issues/8/dobson.html); Christopher Ferguson, "Re-Evaluating Early Medieval Northumbrian Contacts and the Coastal Highway", in *Early Medieval Northumbria: Kingdoms and Communities, AD 450-1100*, ed. David Petts and Sam Turner (2012), 283-302.

<sup>29</sup> Dobson, "Time, Travel and Political Communities"; Ferguson, "Northumbrian Contacts".

<sup>30</sup> Dobson, "Time, Travel and Political Communities", §22; Ferguson, "Northumbrian Contacts", 292.

example, it does not take into account waiting for the right wind to sail. This sort of argument distorts the time that it took to travel overland; it ignores the necessity to wait for good sailing weather and makes no concession to the human logic behind travel that may not have prioritized possible speed. Understanding mobility and society are more than outlining the time taken to travel.

The cumulative evidence and recent scholarly discussions suggest the high competence of Anglo-Saxon seafarers in line with European norms for the period. However, the small number of boat-finds means that interpretations of the practicalities of water transport in early medieval Britain rely heavily on imagination and parallels with Scandinavian finds and replicas. Thus, it is worth remembering that there were distinctions between what sailed in the southern North Sea in the seventh and eighth centuries and the Viking boats that emerged over the following centuries. Whilst maritime archaeology is mostly focussed on the reality of travel, the intersection between ‘materiality and immateriality’ in Christer Westerdahl’s words, the social conceptions of sea travel has been integrated into the process and practice of understanding ships on occasion.<sup>31</sup>

Martin Carver summarized the practicalities of sea travel in the working group document for the Maritime and Marine Historic Environment Research Framework that concluded in 2013:

The state of knowledge suggests that early medieval seafarers could travel from any point to any other on the sea, and at about 15-20 mph did it rather faster and carrying heavier loads than was possible for terrestrial transport. There were perils associated with both forms of travel, and an accident in

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<sup>31</sup> Christer Westerdahl, “The Maritime Cultural Landscape”, *International Journal of Nautical Archaeology* 21, no. 1 (1992): 5-14, at 5-6; “Boats Apart. Building and Equipping an Iron-Age and Early-Medieval Ship in Northern Europe”, *International Journal of Nautical Archaeology* 37, no. 1 (2008): 17-31.

a ship was more likely to be lethal. But there was no technical barrier to the use of Britain's seas.<sup>32</sup>

This positive assessment of the practicalities of the sea necessitates that the relationship between the sea or seafarer and the land must be considered, the places to and through which shipping occurred. Landing places, sheltered anchorage, and sites by rivers and the coast where goods could be loaded and unloaded are at the centre of this interaction.

Ann Cole considered the place-name evidence for such occurrences in early medieval England, noting that they were evident throughout England, except Cornwall, and not as plentiful in the northern counties although there are issues regarding availability of early place-names in the north.<sup>33</sup> More specifically, research has tended to focus on the ports, *emporia* or *wics*, around the Channel and the North Sea from the seventh century onwards. Richard Hodges interpreted these within a ports-of-trade model, emphasizing the importance of both specialist production and exchange at these centres.<sup>34</sup> He viewed *emporia* as a consolidation of the ruling authority of kings, and entry points for prestige objects. The interpretation of *emporia* as at the centre of redistribution of traded prestige goods continued in archaeological discussions into the twenty-first century, for example, John Moreland questioned the role of kings at these

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<sup>32</sup> Carver in Carver and Loveluck, *Working Group Document*, 31.

<sup>33</sup> Ann Cole, "The Place-Name Evidence for Water Transport in Early Medieval England", in *Waterways and Canal-Building in Medieval England*, ed. John Blair (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 55-84.

<sup>34</sup> Richard Hodges, *Dark Age Economics: The Origins of Towns and Trade A.D. 600-1000* (London: Duckworth, 1982), he outlines the port-of-trade model and its related 'gateways communities' concept both of which are borrowed from human geography, 23-5, and uses these in his discussion of *emporia*, 47-65.

sites but still argued for ports as the centre of elite control and distribution of surpluses and prestige goods.<sup>35</sup>

More recently, this focus on elite hierarchies has been rejected in favour of considering coastal settlements and their populations. For Anglo-Saxon maritime activity outside of Lundenwic, Christopher Loveluck has been central to the development of an understanding of the coastal environment. He sought to draw attention to seafaring and artisan populations, whose absence from discussions changes the shape of understanding of the development of ports later in the medieval period. He points out that specialist producers and mariners existed by the seventh century, and relied on commercial exchange for daily life. Thus there is no need to identify a transformation from embedded elite-led exchange to commercial exchange in north-west Europe.<sup>36</sup> Loveluck's key case study is Flixborough, Lincolnshire, and the coastal society between the Humber and the Fens. He points to the implication of near universal access to continental imports at Flixborough and the surrounding area on the role of the *wic* at York.<sup>37</sup> York did not exhibit control over the actions of traders around the Humber estuary, and the comparable paucity of imported goods in the area between York and

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<sup>35</sup> John Moreland, "The Significance of Production in Eighth-Century England", in *The Long Eighth Century*, ed. Inge Lyse Hansen and Chris Wickham (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 69-104.

<sup>36</sup> Loveluck, *Northwest Europe*, 206.

<sup>37</sup> Glass and pottery vessels for feasting from northern France to the Rhineland, imported querns, coinage from Frisia, France and Anglo-Saxon kingdoms combined with consumption of cattle in high quantities in addition to evidence for the exploitation of wild animals, was found at Flixborough. Across the sea, in Frisia and Flanders, the coastal plains, tidal-creeks, and island-scapes provide evidence of unbroken settlement, production, and trading with networks spanning the North Sea, the Channel, into the western seas of Britain, from the late-sixth century to the late-ninth century. See Loveluck, *Northwest Europe*, 186-7 and 191-7 particularly 196.

the Humber indicates that York was not involved in the distribution of these goods in this period. The Humber estuary itself was the major contact and exchange zone.<sup>38</sup>

Loveluck's monograph, *Northwest Europe in the Early Middle Ages*, builds in part upon his 'Coastal Societies, Exchange and Identity along the Channel and Southern North Sea Shores of Europe'.<sup>39</sup> The latter explored the role of coastal societies and contact zones in the southern North Sea. *Northwest Europe* included additional case studies from around the North Sea as well as research into other aspects of society. In 'Coastal Societies', Loveluck emphasized the coastal environment as a permanently inhabited landscape with a greater exploitation of coastal resources than was previously assumed. This overturning of assumptions about the habitability of seemingly marginal coastal landscapes goes together with an increase in knowledge of the number of sites involved in maritime exchange. The shores of the North Sea might now be understood to have been littered with seafaring maritime communities, who engaged frequently with one another across the water, and knew the character of the sea well.

### 0.2.2. Land Routes

Developments in conceptualizing sea travel in the early medieval period threaten to overshadow the use of overland means of transportation. There are widespread problems with identifying medieval roads in general; these problems are amplified for the early medieval period. However, scholarship has engaged with the practicalities of Anglo-Saxon land transport in various ways.<sup>40</sup> Albert Leighton attempted to address

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 188-9. Loveluck also argued this in the case of Driffield in "The Development of the Anglo-Saxon Landscape, Economy and Society 'on Driffield', East Yorkshire", *Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeology and History* 9 (1996): 25-48.

<sup>39</sup> Loveluck and Tys, "Coastal Societies"; Loveluck, *Northwest Europe*.

<sup>40</sup> The Anglo-Saxon roads themselves still offer a potential for study. For the example of Wiltshire, David Pelteret has discussed how roads might be found in "The Roads of Anglo-Saxon England",

the issue of early medieval transport and communication. He opened his monograph on the subject stating ‘little has been written on the history of transport and communication in western Europe between AD 500 and AD 1100. The reasons for this become apparent rapidly to anyone who tries to remedy the situation’.<sup>41</sup> Little has changed in the past forty years. His significant points about early medieval land transport in western Europe were that the period was not a time of road building, but that new routes were made and customary rites of routes were enshrined.<sup>42</sup> He also posed that the Roman road system became a liability, and was not maintained.<sup>43</sup>

Use of the Roman road network is difficult to assess, although the presence of Roman roads within the later medieval road system, for which see *Figure 1*, demonstrates the ongoing use of many stretches through the Anglo-Saxon period. Ann Cole recently undertook a re-evaluation of the Roman road system in Anglo-Saxon England based on place-name evidence.<sup>44</sup> Principally seeking to investigate routes through Anglo-Saxon England, aspects of her assessment were overly blunt. For example, for the sake of creating a manageable data set she only considered places within a short distance of Roman roads or the ‘ridgeways’. This is understandable, but it rather shaped the direction that the research took. However, as a discussion of the evidence for the use of Roman roads and ‘ridgeways’ over the *longue durée* of the Anglo-Saxon period, it is an interesting examination of connectivity expressed by the landscape itself.

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*Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine* 79 (1985): 153-63. Currently there is an ongoing Leverhume-funded collaborative project ‘Travel and Communication in Anglo-Saxon England’ based at University College London and the University of Nottingham, incorporating archaeological, onomastic, and historical evidence to reconstruct routes, and to consider the experience of travel.

<sup>41</sup> Albert C. Leighton, *Transport and Communication in Early Medieval Europe, AD 500-1100* (Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 1972), 9.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 57.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 52-3.

<sup>44</sup> Ann Cole, ‘The Place-Name Evidence for a Route-Way Network in Early Medieval England’ (PhD Thesis, University of Oxford, 2010).

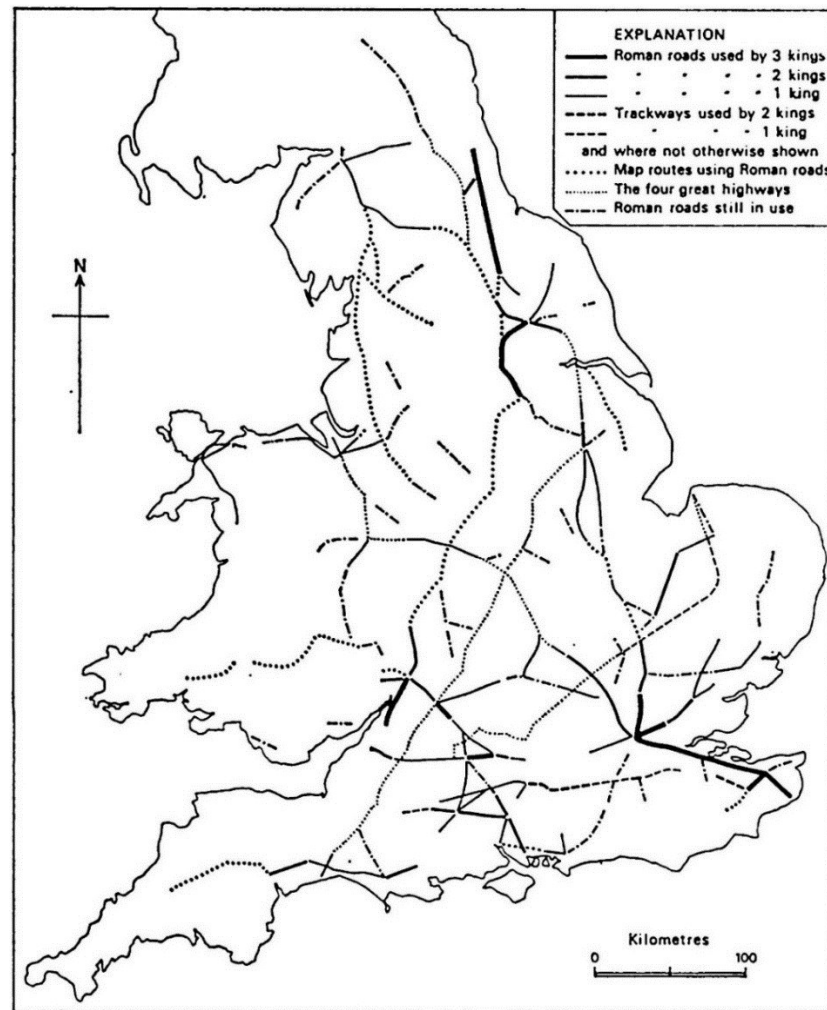


Figure 1. The Roman roads that can be confirmed to have been in use in the later Middle Ages, from Hindle, "The Road Network", 219.

Cole considers place-name elements that referred to roads directly, as well as those that referred to crossing places, travellers' facilities such as water supplies, lodgings, fodder, and places whose names might refer to giving assistance to travellers in difficulty, where road conditions posed particular problems. Her assessment of roads in use does not encompass the northern counties because of their absence from the Domesday survey, but she assumes, based on the spread of place-name evidence for



Roman road use, that the Great North Road had continuous use although its exact route cannot be tracked.<sup>45</sup>

On the whole, Cole argues that roads are long-standing features of the landscape and a high proportion of Roman roads were in use south of York, although some were not. In particular, she picked out Watling Street as unimportant to the Anglo-Saxons.<sup>46</sup> Tim Tatton-Brown had previously considered the particularities of Watling Street; he noted that the Anglo-Saxon route did not follow the Roman route.<sup>47</sup> He demonstrated that stretches of the original were lost due to neglect, as the later medieval and modern roads into Canterbury deviate from the Roman road. He proposed that this neglect occurred by the fifth century, and was sustained during the early and middle Saxon period when the Roman towns along the route from Dover to London through Canterbury lost their significance, and thus the connection between them was redundant.<sup>48</sup>

The search for roads themselves can be a problematic matter, un-dateable and under-documented. Any successful study needs to be multi-disciplinary.<sup>49</sup> Paul Hindle recently produced an outline of the historiography of the study of roads and their networks; he highlights that there was no scholarly interest in understanding medieval

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 114.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 141-54.

<sup>47</sup> Tim Tatton-Brown, "The Evolution of 'Watling Street' in Kent", *Archaeologia Cantiana* 121 (2001): 121-33.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 124-5. He argues that the Dover to London land-route reappeared with the creation of the burhs and urban settlement but that it only became important from the time of Cnut, after the threat of the Vikings had been removed.

<sup>49</sup> A combination of documentary evidence, archaeology, the study of maps and landscapes has been outlined as necessary for a multi-pronged study of medieval roads by Brian Paul Hindle, "Sources for the English Medieval Road System", in *Roadworks: Medieval Britain, Medieval Roads*, ed. Valerie Allen and Ruth Evans (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016), 33-49.

road systems before the early twentieth century.<sup>50</sup> Early twentieth century historians C. T. Flower and Frank Stenton are amongst those who put roads and transport into focus. They tended to use negative terminology when describing the conditions of medieval roads and travel.<sup>51</sup> For example, Flower, writing an extensive study of medieval legal documents in 1923, stated that ‘with the exception of the drainage ditches on either side, the king’s highway made and maintained itself’.<sup>52</sup> This idea of roads emerging naturally from the ground has continued. Six decades later, Hindle himself, an historical geographer, has made use of Flower’s phrase.<sup>53</sup> By making medieval roads natural phenomena in this way, the medieval period forms a ‘primitive’ stage in the teleological evolution of roads. It is worth noting that, for most studies of the history of roads, the medieval period under discussion tends to be situated broadly in the twelfth through fifteenth centuries.<sup>54</sup> This embryonic conception of medieval roads finds solidarity in late medieval and early modern travellers’ accounts and legal cases that complain about the state of the roads.<sup>55</sup> However, since complaints were raised about the state of certain roads, one might assume that others were more than self-made mud-tracks. The documentary evidence for roadways is sparse, and reconstruction of road networks on any scale is speculative, although rough outlines of an England-wide road system in the central Middle Ages have been suggested, an

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid.; by contrast, earlier writers considered the travellers themselves and the ‘experience’ of travelling, see J. J. Jusserand, *English Wayfaring Life in the Middle Ages* (London: T. F. Unwin, 1889).

<sup>51</sup> Cyril Thomas Flower, *Public Works in Mediaeval Law*, Publications of the Selden Society, 2 vols. (London: B. Quaritch, 1915 and 1923); Frank M. Stenton, “The Road System of Medieval England”, *The Economic History Review* 7, no. 1 (1936): 1-21.

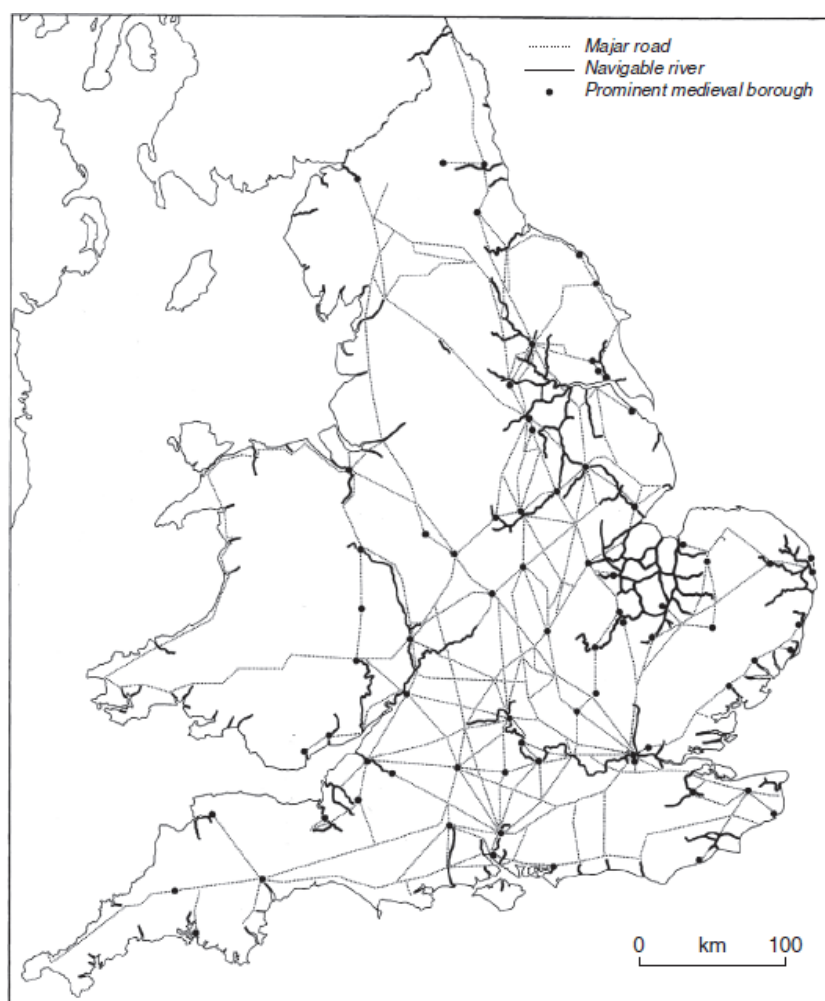
<sup>52</sup> Flower, *Public Works*, 2:xvi.

<sup>53</sup> Brian Paul Hindle, “The Road Network of Medieval England and Wales”, *Journal of Historical Geography* 2, no. 3 (1976): 207-21, at 208; *Medieval Roads* (Aylesbury: Shire, 1982).

<sup>54</sup> This is the case even in the most recent publications on medieval roads both in Britain and Europe, see Alison L. Gascoigne, Leonie V. Hicks, and Marianne O’Doherty, *Journeying Along Medieval Routes in Europe and the Middle East*, Medieval Voyaging (Turnhout: Brepols, 2016); Valerie Allen and Ruth Evans, *Roadworks: Medieval Britain, Medieval Roads*, Manchester Medieval Literature and Culture (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016).

<sup>55</sup> See for example, Flower, *Public Works* 98, 207-8.

example of which is shown in *Figure 2*.<sup>56</sup> Problems concerning the availability of evidence for the central Middle Ages are amplified for earlier periods.



*Figure 2.* The roads and navigable rivers of England in the fourteenth century, from Hindle, “English Medieval Road System”, 46.

<sup>56</sup> Hindle proposes that one begin with the Roman road network, and then search for other routes that connections in the evidence make clear, “English Medieval Road System”, 46-7. He has outlined a possible road network and an integrated transport system, see “The Road Network”; James Frederick Edwards and Brian Paul Hindle, “The Transportation System of Medieval England and Wales”, *Journal of Historical Geography* 17, no. 2 (1991): 123-34. The integrated system produced a debate that was principally focussed on the changing nature of rivers and inland water transportation. See John Langdon, “Inland Water Transport in Medieval England”, *Journal of Historical Geography* 19, no. 1 (1993): 1-11; James Frederick Edwards and Brian Paul Hindle, “Comment: Inland Water Transportation in Medieval England”, *Journal of Historical Geography* 19, no. 1 (1993): 12-14; Evan T. Jones, “River Navigation in Medieval England”, *Journal of Historical Geography* 26 (2000): 60-75; John Langdon, “Inland Water Transport in Medieval England – the View from the Mills: A Response to Jones”, *Journal of Historical Geography* 26 (2000): 75-82. Further discussion of the role and scale of inland waterways across the broader medieval period has been carried out away from this debate, for example in the edited volume John Blair, *Waterways and Canal-Building in Medieval England*, Medieval History and Archaeology (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

The study of early medieval land transport focussed upon roads has not successfully identified a mechanism for explaining and understanding the mobility of the period. When it comes to the study of roads, it is challenging to allow for human agency in the creation and maintenance of roads and to consider the roads as mediators that carried ideas and influenced society. Recently due to developments from anthropology, studies have begun to emphasize the experience of the journey and the traveller, and to place the past individual on the road.<sup>57</sup> Norbert Ohler undertook an early attempt to understand the experience of medieval travellers in northern Europe by stressing the practicalities of travelling and offering a range of examples, however, because of the broad expanse of time and geography covered, his study creates only a sense of generalism.<sup>58</sup> In a more recent study of Anglo-Saxon roads, Andrew Reynolds and Alexander Langlands placed the individual at the heart of roads and transport. By examining ideological cues in the landscape along communication routes, they proposed that travellers were using mental mapping, memory, and mythologizing.<sup>59</sup> In contemporary landscape archaeology, the focus on the centrality of memory in landscape requires movement by definition.<sup>60</sup> Reynolds and Langlands propose that long-distance overland travel was realized through the recollection of waypoints, markers, and topographical features. Distinctive topographies marked out boundaries

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<sup>57</sup> See for example Andrew Reynolds, "The Archaeology of Travel and Communication", *World Archaeology* 43, no. 3 (2011): 343-44. And in a North American context, James E. Snead, Clark L. Erickson, and J. Andrew Darling, *Landscapes of Movement: Trails, Paths, and Roads in Anthropological Perspective* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, 2009); and in particular Snead, Erickson, and Darling's introductory essay "Making Human Space: The Archaeology of Trails, Paths, and Roads", 1-19.

<sup>58</sup> Norbert Ohler, *The Medieval Traveller*, trans. Caroline Hillier (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1989).

<sup>59</sup> Andrew Reynolds and Alexander Langlands, "Travel as Communication: A Consideration of Overland Journeys in Anglo-Saxon England", *World Archaeology* 43, no. 3 (2011): 410-27.

<sup>60</sup> Andrew Reynolds, "The Archaeology of Travel and Communication", *World Archaeology* 43, no. 3 (2011): 343-44.

and funnelled movement. This created places ripe with potential for monumental expressions of power, belief, and identity.<sup>61</sup>

Northumbria is often sidelined in the discussion of English roads. Despite this, connectivity in early medieval Northumbria, particularly that of monastic sites, has been the focus of its own investigations. For example, Ian Wood focussed in on the specific location of Jarrow, and the importance of its place on an east-west axis, assuming continued use of Roman infrastructure. Jarrow is situated on the line of the Roman Stanegate, which ran up the Tyne valley past Corbridge, Hexham, and across the Pennines to Carlisle and the Solway.<sup>62</sup> Fiona Edmonds similarly considered east-west connections between Northumbria and Ireland, although she has also proposed that this route may have made use of river transport.<sup>63</sup> Wood connected the importance of his east-west land connection with the north-south coastal route that runs from Dunbar (or Pictland) to Kent and beyond.<sup>64</sup> The broad picture allows for movement to and through Northumbria from north, south, and west, by land or water, or both. The intricacies of such routes are not known, but for understanding mobility as a whole, the fact that movement was possible on this scale suffices.

To some extent, the utility of land transport is dependent on the physicality of the landscape, and the practicalities and technologies available. The practicalities of using

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<sup>61</sup> Andrew Reynolds and Alexander Langlands, "Travel as Communication", 413.

<sup>62</sup> Ian N. Wood, "Bede's Jarrow", in *A Place to Believe In: Locating Medieval Landscapes*, ed. Clare A. Lees and Gillian R. Overing (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006), 67-84, at 67-8.

<sup>63</sup> Fiona Edmonds, "The Practicalities of Communication between Northumbrian and Irish Churches, c. 635-735", in *Anglo-Saxon/Irish Relations before the Vikings*, ed. James Graham-Campbell and Michael Ryan, Proceedings of the British Academy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 129-47, at 26-9; "Barrier or Unifying".

<sup>64</sup> Wood, "Bede's Jarrow", 68. Richard Morris agrees with this picture of Jarrow's connected-nature, identifying Bede's monastery as set in a busy landscape of royal and monastic places, and the meeting point of these two axes of communication: the gateway to far off places, see Richard Morris, *Journeys from Jarrow*, Jarrow Lecture (Jarrow: St Paul's Church, 2007), 5-10.

horses ought to be the strongest indicator of how people travelled. However, evidence of horses is somewhat elusive. Most specifically discussed by Sarah Larratt Keefer, horses in Anglo-Saxon England were used primarily for riding, although they were also used in farming and as pack animals.<sup>65</sup> She outlined horse-illustrations in Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, describing their features as those of oriental horses; thus horses were imported and selectively bred.<sup>66</sup> From these illustrations, and in proportion to their human riders, she proposed that the horses were between 12 and 14 hands, assuming an average rider's height of 5'6".<sup>67</sup> Similarly, Debby Banham and Rosamond Faith, in their discussion of horses in Anglo-Saxon farming, put the average horse at 13 hands, or between 11.2-14 hands. They likewise support the interpretation that English horses were bred from high-quality stock from the Continent, arguing that the use of English horses to enhance Irish stock is suggestive of selective breeding programmes.<sup>68</sup>

Much of the physicality and materiality of the technologies of transport, and horse transport in particular, is transient. In general terms, the flexibility and control over the horse gained by riding technologies, stirrups and saddle developments, is more relevant to fighting than travel.<sup>69</sup> Some technologies that may relate to farming, such

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<sup>65</sup> Sarah Larratt Keefer, "Hwær Cwom Mearh? The Horse in Anglo-Saxon England", *Journal of Medieval History* 22, no. 2 (1996): 115-34, at 118.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 120.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 117.

<sup>68</sup> They also discuss the presence of stud farms, and the occurrence of the place-name element *stod*, Debby Banham and Rosamond Faith, *Anglo-Saxon Farms and Farming*, Medieval History and Archaeology (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 79, 82.

<sup>69</sup> Stirrups for example: in England, they appear in the archaeological record from the ninth-century, see Wilfred A. Seaby and Paul Woodfield, "Viking Stirrups from England and Their Background", *Medieval Archaeology* 24 (1980): 87-122, at 89. It is probable that early stirrups were rope or leather, as is suggested by the etymology of the English 'stirrup': OE *stige-rap* from OE *stigan* 'to mount' and OE *rap* 'rope'. The form and use of potential early, pre-iron, 'mount-ropes' is unknown, discussed by Juliet Clutton-Brock, *Horse Power: A History of the Horse and the Donkey in Human Societies* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), 76. Irene Hughson proposed that the gait of medieval horses does not necessitate stirrups for riding, see "Horses in the Early Historic Period: Evidence from

as vehicles and harnesses, have more relevance to travel than riding technologies do. It is likely that most working horses in northern Europe were shod, however after the Roman era there is no evidence of horseshoes or hipposandals until the ninth-century, but when they reappear in the archaeological record the adoption was widespread and rapid, by the eleventh century they were universal.<sup>70</sup> Early medieval horseshoes were plausibly made of leather or other natural fibres rather than iron, and therefore unlikely to be present archaeologically. Overall, the likelihood of horse technologies being made from natural fibres makes the changing practicalities of horsemanship unknowable. Some metal objects that comprised parts of horse tack do survive, primarily bridles, bits, and harness decoration. There are examples of early and middle Saxon bits and harness decorations found across the length of England, and even in Scotland.<sup>71</sup> These are primarily fragmentary and decorative, and not indicative of travel itself. They are evidence of the ongoing practice of equestrianism in general terms and the decoration of horses in social terms.

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the Pictish Sculptured Stones”, in *The Horse in Celtic Culture: Medieval Welsh Perspectives*, ed. Sioned Davies and Nerys Ann Jones (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1997), 23-42, at 37. The purpose of stirrups is therefore considered to be warfare, this is most dramatically argued for by Lynn Townsend White, *Medieval Technology and Social Change* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962). White’s argument that stirrups were symbolic of the advancement of Carolingian feudalism may have been overturned, but the role of stirrups in tight manoeuvring remains more necessary in conflict situations than in travel. For the controversy surrounding the origins of feudalism debate, see Ralph H. C. Davis, *The Medieval Warhorse: Origin, Development, and Redevelopment* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1989), 12.

<sup>70</sup> Clutton-Brock, *Horse Power*, 73. John Langdon, *Horses, Oxen, and Technological Innovation: The Use of Draught Animals in English Farming from 1066 to 1500*, Past and Present Publications (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 8.

<sup>71</sup> Tania M. Dickinson, Chris Fern, and Mark A. Hall, “An Early Anglo-Saxon Bridle-Fitting from South Leckaway, Forfar, Angus, Scotland”, *Medieval Archaeology* 50 (2006): 249-60; Chris Fern, “The Archaeological Evidence for Equestrianism in Early Anglo-Saxon England, c. 450-700”, in *Just Skin and Bones? New Perspectives on Human-Animal Relations in the Historic Past*, ed. Aleksander Pluskowski, (Oxford: British Archaeology Reports, 2005), 43-71.

### 0.2.3. The Comparisons

The study of travel and movement elsewhere does not hinge on the same principles of investigation as it does for Anglo-Saxon England. For Northumbria's northern and western neighbours, the Picts and the Irish, the study of travel has focussed on the evidence provided by the corpus of carved stone for the former and ancient roads and their impact on trade for the latter. The Picts, who left no textual record of their own, are known as equestrians because of the prominence of horses in the corpus of carved stone, although their equestrianism is not much studied.<sup>72</sup> Irene Hughson has written on the realism of Pictish horses in sculpture.<sup>73</sup> Commenting on their naturalism, she argued that the depicted animals reflect those that the artists saw around them.<sup>74</sup> Therefore, there were good riding horses in early medieval Pictland. From the images of horses on stone, Hughson gauged the heights of the animals as mostly around 14 hands, with some smaller examples, thus similar to the estimates for Anglo-Saxon horses.<sup>75</sup> She also focussed on the necessity of a high level of breeding and selection undertaken during the Pictish period, which is again echoed in ideas about Anglo-Saxon horses. A reliable horse was the product of sensible breeding, feeding, handling, and training including exercise to build up the physique for the sake of carrying weight and developing a good human-horse relationship.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> For a limited outline of the role of the horse and riding in early medieval Scotland see Leslie Alcock, *Kings and Warriors, Craftsmen and Priests in Northern Britain, AD 550-850* (Edinburgh: Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, 2003), 419-20.

<sup>73</sup> Irene Hughson, "Pictish Horse Carvings", *Glasgow Archaeological Journal* 17 (1991): 53-61; "Horses"; "Pictish Horses and Pictish Society", in *Celtic Connections: Proceedings of the 10th International Congress of Celtic Studies*, ed. Ronald Black, William Gillies, and Roibeard Ó Maolalaigh (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 1999), 211-21.

<sup>74</sup> Hughson, "Pictish Horse Carvings", 54.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 56.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 56, 58-9. Concerning stabling, she noted that fences and shelter would be sufficient, following a raid, horses freed by the breaking of fences were likely return. See Hughson, "Horses", 33, in which she argues that there were no true wild horses in Britain, only feral ones, and likely not many of them.



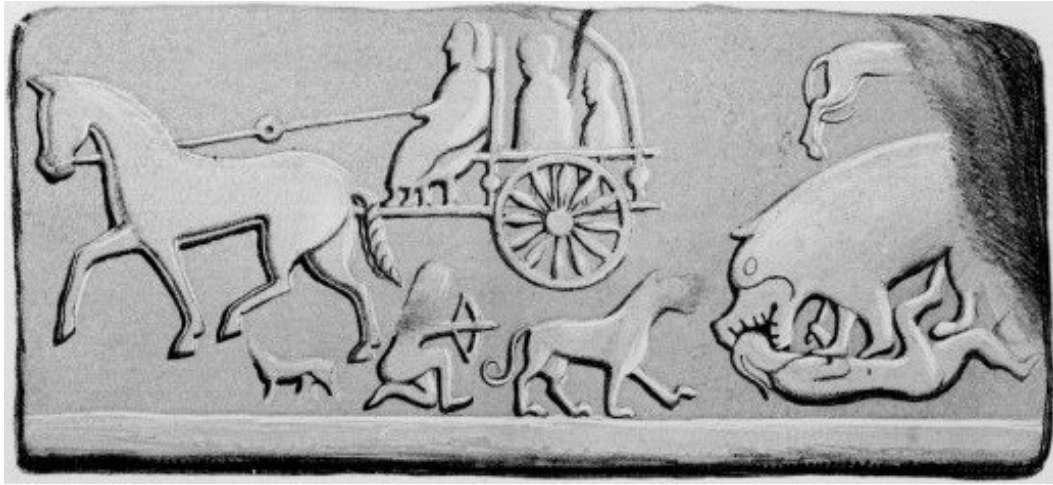


Figure 3. Meigle 10 showing the Pictish chariot, from John Stuart, *Sculptured Stones of Scotland* (Aberdeen: Spalding Club, 1856), plate lxxvi.

Travel depicted within the Pictish corpus of carved stones extends beyond the imagery of horses. There is limited evidence for vehicles in the sculpture. Famously, Meigle 10 with its depiction of a Pictish ‘chariot’ was lost before the end of the nineteenth century, destroyed in 1869, but five antiquarian studies depicting it survive. One such is portrayed in *Figure 3*. J. N. G. Ritchie discussed these. He compared the illustrations and noticed the shared details: the pair of horses pulling a vehicle, and a small doughnut-like feature attached to the reins.<sup>77</sup> For a long time it was considered unique, but John Borland noted a similar horse-drawn vehicle on a lost stone from Newtyle that was never recorded, and newly re-assessed the carving on the Skinnet cross slab.<sup>78</sup> He re-identified the horse on the Skinnet cross slab as part of a pair pulling a vehicle

<sup>77</sup> J. N. G. Ritchie, “Recording Early Christian Monuments in Scotland”, in *The Worm, the Germ and the Thorn: Pictish and Related Studies Presented to Isabel Henderson*, ed. David Henry (Forfar: Pinkfoot Press, 1997), 119-28. John Romilly Allen and Joseph Anderson describe it as ‘a portion of a single panel, containing a figure subject consisting of (on the left) three men in a chariot drawn by a pair of horses abreast of each other; (below the chariot) a kneeling figure with a bow (as on the “Drosten” stone at S Vigeans, Forfarshire), shooting at a beast; (at the right hand upper corner) the hind part of a hound with its tail curved between its legs; and (at the bottom on the right) a huge beast devouring a man, who lies prostrate on the ground and is thrusting a weapon into the beast’s heart; facing it is a hound at bay, behind the archer another hound retreating’. From *The Early Christian Monuments of Scotland* (Edinburgh: Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, 1903), 3:331.

<sup>78</sup> John Borland, ‘A new ‘chariot’ carving in Northern Pictland’, paper given at Pictish Arts Society 2011 conference, summarized in Pictish Arts Society, “Newsletter 61”, (2011). Thanks go to Katherine Forsyth for bringing this to my attention.

that has been broken off from the stone. Coming from the horse is an incised line, the reins, leading to the same ‘doughnut’ feature that Meigle 10 showed. As a result, Borland reinterpreted these horses as pulling a vehicle and suggested that the legs of the vehicle’s driver can be identified.

In contrast, the study of travel in Ireland has been undertaken in a road-focussed manner. Compared to most English scholarship, which sees medieval roads as underdeveloped and almost naturally occurring, Irish scholarship followed a different trajectory with early historical investigation understanding Ireland to have had a network of constructed roads. This is in part down to the testimony of early Irish law codes but is also the result of the ‘nativist’ tradition, which asserted the underlying pre-Christian ‘Irishness’ of observable medieval features. In 1940, Colm O’Lochlainn wrote a short article outlining the roadways in ancient Ireland, and this formed the basis of all later scholarship into early medieval routeways in Ireland.<sup>79</sup> O’Lochlainn proposed that an extensive road system existed in Ireland, based on the frequent mention of certain key places in literature and hagiography and the locations of assembly sites, harbours, and battlefields. He proposed that this early road system was formalized in the tradition of the five great roadways emanating from Tara that appeared around AD 1000, but that these roads had great antiquity even then.

The five roadways as described by O’Lochlainn almost passed into fact. They were taken up by archaeologists in discussions of trade and exchange as the routes along which economic activities were carried out. Michelle Comber, Charles Doherty, and

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<sup>79</sup> Colm O’Lochlainn, “Roadways in Ancient Ireland”, in *Féil-Sgríbhinn Eóin Mhic Néill: Essays and Studies Presented to Professor Eoin Macneill*, ed. John Ryan (Dublin: At the Sign of the Three Candles, 1940), 465-74.

Richard Warner were all unquestioning of the routes proposed by O’Lochlainn.<sup>80</sup>

These routes were given cartographic presence by Warner thirty-six years after O’Lochlainn’s article was originally published (see *Figure 4*).<sup>81</sup> Thomas Charles-

Edwards and later Charles Doherty have reassessed Irish roads and O’Lochlainn’s ancient routeways in the past five years. Both continue to support the concept of a connected network, constructed roads, and political oversight of the infrastructure.<sup>82</sup>

Charles-Edwards reconsidered the textual evidence for roads, and in doing so re-outlined the five highways of Ireland.<sup>83</sup> He disagreed with the details of O’Lochlainn’s routes but retained the notion of the five highways of Ireland. Seemingly unaware of Charles-Edwards’s contribution, Charles Doherty recently wrote an article compiling the terminology of roads in early Ireland. Doherty did not engage with the politics of roads as Charles-Edwards did. Instead, he produced a thorough outline of the various words used for different grades of roads. Particularly lacking in Doherty’s discussion is the intricacy with which Charles-Edwards dealt with the existing material and his thorough and convincing explanation of the *belach* (pass) as a deliberately defensible point on the road rather than a naturally occurring small passage.<sup>84</sup> Doherty, by contrast, assumes the nuances of the modern English ‘pass’.<sup>85</sup> The real contribution of

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<sup>80</sup> Michelle Comber, “Trade and Communication Networks in Early Historic Ireland”, *The Journal of Irish Archaeology* 10 (2001): 73-92, at 74; Charles Doherty, “Exchange and Trade in Early Medieval Ireland”, *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* 110 (1980): 67-89; Richard Warner, “Some Observations on the Context and Importation of Exotic Material in Ireland, from the First Century B.C. To the Second Century A.D”, *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy. Section C: Archaeology, Celtic Studies, History, Linguistics, Literature* 76 (1976): 267-92.

<sup>81</sup> Warner, “Some Observations”, 277.

<sup>82</sup> Thomas M. Charles-Edwards, “Some Thoughts on Early Irish Roads and Travel”, in *Ilteangach, Ilseiftiúil: Féilscribhinn in Ómós Do Nicholas Williams*, ed. Liam Mac Amhlaigh and Brian Ó Curnáin (Dublin: Arlen House, 2012), 71-95; Charles Doherty, “A Road Well Travelled: The Terminology of Roads in Early Ireland”, in *Clerics, Kings and Vikings: Essays on Medieval Ireland in Honour of Donnchadh Ó Corráin*, ed. Emer Purcell, et al. (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2015), 21-30.

<sup>83</sup> Charles-Edwards, “Irish Roads”, 79-87.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 89-92.

<sup>85</sup> Doherty, “Road Well Travelled”, 29.

his article is that it attempts to return roads, and the language of roads, to the attention of scholars of early medieval Ireland.

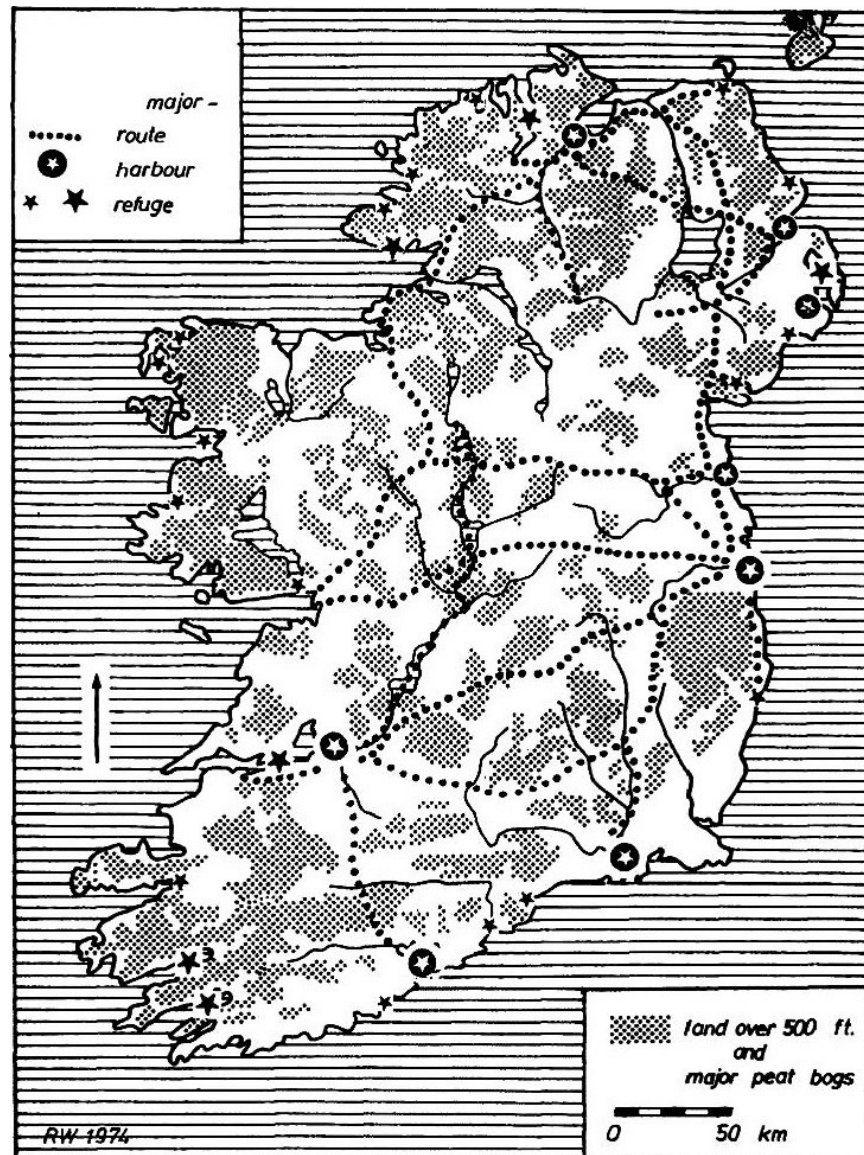


Figure 4. Colm O'Lochlainn's proposed routeways across Ireland, from Warner, "Some Observations", 277.

Irish and Welsh textual evidence is suggestive of both the constructed and legal nature of roads. In Cogitosus's *Vita Brigitae*, a king instructs the peoples of the *tuath* (petty kingdom) that a section of bog road must be built.<sup>86</sup> Charles-Edwards perceives this as

<sup>86</sup> Cogitosus, *Vita Brigitae* = *Life of Brigit*, ed. in *Februarii I* (1-6) *Acta Sanctorum* 3 Société des Bollandistes (Brepols); translation based on unpublished edition by Seán Connolly and J. M. Picard,

demonstrating that the real powers of provincial kings were expressed in their *tuath*'s road system.<sup>87</sup> Elsewhere, Andrew Fleming has found evidence from a Welsh legal triad that suggests that metalled roads may have been common in Wales.<sup>88</sup> Likewise, the suggestion from early Irish law tracts is that at least some roads were constructed. Fergus Kelly's *Early Irish Farming* offers legal definitions of roads, stating that there were five types: *slige* (highway), *rout/rót* (road), *lámraite* (by-road), *tógraithe/túagraite* (curved road), and *bóthar* (cow-track).<sup>89</sup> The legal tracts include a description of what each of these types of road ought to support. The *slige* and *rout* were constructed roads that could carry chariots. Even the lowest rank of road, the *bóthar*, was meant to be broad enough to fit two cows, one sideways and one lengthways. Not only do legal tracts suggest that some Irish roads were constructed, but there is also evidence that maintenance was required for all road types. Irish roads and travel may be no more studied than their English counterparts; nevertheless, the early development and longevity of the idea that roads formed a network, combined with the evidence for construction and maintenance from an early period, have led to very different scholarly conceptions of roads and travel in the earlier Middle Ages.

Trade and exchange is also a feature of research into Irish travel and connections to the Continent. Aidan O'Sullivan and Christopher Loveluck have recently reassessed this. They discussed the evidence for trade found in imported artefacts and tangible signs of direct contact between the Irish Sea and western and southern France along

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"Cogitosus's 'Life of St Brigit' Content and Value", *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* 117, (1987): 5-27. See Chapter 30, 'Of the river diverted from its own course to another'.

<sup>87</sup> Charles-Edwards, "Irish Roads", 76-7.

<sup>88</sup> Andrew Fleming, "Horses, Elites...And Long-Distance Roads", *Landscapes* 11, no. 2 (2010): 1-20, at 11.

<sup>89</sup> Fergus Kelly, *Early Irish Farming: A Study Based Mainly on the Law-Texts of the 7th and 8th Centuries AD* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1997), 538.

the Atlantic cultural zone.<sup>90</sup> Trade can be a factor in clerical movement, as Johnathan Wooding illuminated, and is ultimately important in outlining possible journeys that could have been made.<sup>91</sup> O’Sullivan and Loveluck point to two trade networks operational in different geographical and chronological spaces:

The first is a sixth-century network running from the Mediterranean northwards along the west coast of Iberia to the Bay of Biscay, and hence to southern Ireland and southwest Britain. [...] This ceased to exist in the mid to late sixth century, because of changes in the western Mediterranean economy. The second network was focused on trading links between western Britain and Ireland and the west coast of France, particularly estuaries and river valleys of the Gironde (in the sixth century) and the Charente and Loire in the sixth and seventh centuries.<sup>92</sup>

They argue that we ought not to assume that ecclesiastical networks were the primary long-distance networks. Instead, they comment on the continuing nature of maritime infrastructure connecting Ireland to western France through the seventh and eighth centuries, supported by the trade of wine and salt.<sup>93</sup> The archaeology of commerce, whether it is Irish, English, or continental, demonstrates the potential to travel great distances, and to interact with foreign traders closer to home. Whilst not the focus of this thesis, the potential expansiveness and connectivity of the early medieval world is an underlying necessity for understanding mobility as it was narrated.

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<sup>90</sup> Christopher Loveluck and Aidan O’Sullivan, “Travel, Transport and Communication to and from Ireland, c. 400-1100: An Archaeological Perspective”, in *The Irish in Early Medieval Europe: Identity, Culture and Religion*, ed. Roy Flechner and Sven Meeder (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 19-37.

<sup>91</sup> Wooding, “Trade as a Factor”.

<sup>92</sup> Loveluck and O’Sullivan, “Travel, Transport”, 26.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

#### 0.2.4. Theology of Travel

Theology is the best means for engaging with the conceptualisation of travel, which is the primary focus of this thesis, in a medieval context. Travel is not a particular emphasis of theologians, medieval or modern. However, there are aspects of the intersection between religion and movement to which attention has been drawn. In particular, pilgrimage captures the imagination and draws focus.

Theology and travel might intersect with travel as pilgrimage, travel as mission, travel from persecution, travel as worship or a meditative act, or in restrictions placed on travel. In modern theological discussions of travel, pilgrimage and Jerusalem are at the forefront of the mind. This cannot be said to be the case for early medieval theologically derived interactions with travel, but the context is illuminating. The place of Jerusalem in a theology of pilgrimage stems from the rootedness of pilgrimage as a practice within the Old Testament; Old Testament pilgrimage is embedded in the land of Israel. Israelites were to go on pilgrimage three times a year to the central sanctuary, which was Jerusalem for most of Old Testament history. In doing so, they celebrated occupying the Promised Land.<sup>94</sup> Old Testament worship presupposes this strong notion of sacral place – Yahweh’s dwelling was the Temple, and Israelites went to the Temple to see or to be seen by Him.<sup>95</sup>

Old Testament land awareness was neutralized in the New Testament, and the Church emerged as a de-ethnicized, de-territorialized, multilingual body, neither needing

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<sup>94</sup> Discussed by Gordon McConville, “Pilgrimage and ‘Place’: An Old Testament View”, in *Explorations in Christian Theology of Pilgrimage*, ed. Craig G. Bartholomew and Fred Hughes (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 17-28, at 17.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, 20-1.

sacred space nor sacred *ethnos* nor sacred tongue.<sup>96</sup> Jerusalem lost its earthly significance.<sup>97</sup> In general, New Testament principles of worship oppose a focus on holy place; there is no point in venerating a site if one is not heeding the word of God. In Acts 1:8, the disciples leave Jerusalem, and the centrifugal thrust of the Christian message takes the Gospel to the ‘ends of the earth’.<sup>98</sup> Further, the person of Jesus embodies the significance that the Jews invested in the Temple and festival pilgrimages.<sup>99</sup> Therefore, there was a Christological transformation of the goal of pilgrimage. Jesus became the true focus of worship, and so to go on pilgrimage became to come to Christ. Beyond that, the metaphor of pilgrimage emerging from the New Testament depicts the eschatological reality inaugurated by Christ. Andrew Lincoln argued that this pilgrimage is dependent on an original literal notion of travel to sacred place but does not need to re-enact this literal referent.<sup>100</sup> The Gospel writers, in their different ways, produced a textual ‘here we find him’ and Jesus was delocalized because of the great diaspora.<sup>101</sup> The ritual sacrament of the breaking of the bread made Jesus present irrespective of time or space from Jerusalem. The importance of the textual nature of Christianity in understanding and representing the sacral cannot be underestimated, likewise the importance of the universality of sacraments and

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<sup>96</sup> Expressed as such by Kenneth Cragg, “Jesus, Jerusalem and Pilgrimage Today”, in *Explorations in Christian Theology of Pilgrimage*, ed. Craig G. Bartholomew and Fred Hughes (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 1-14, at 5.

<sup>97</sup> Andrew T. Lincoln, “Pilgrimage and the New Testament”, in *Explorations in Christian Theology of Pilgrimage*, ed. Craig G. Bartholomew and Fred Hughes (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 29-49, at 31-2. For Paul in particular, Jerusalem was heavenly. He called upon Isaiah 54:1 in Galatians 4:27. The idea that Jerusalem transcends the bounds of the earthly is in Isaiah 65:17-25; Paul applied this Isaianic prophecy to the heavenly Jerusalem.

<sup>98</sup> Discussed by Peter Walker, “Pilgrimage in the Early Church”, in *Explorations in Christian Theology of Pilgrimage*, ed. Craig G. Bartholomew and Fred Hughes (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 73-91, at 74.

<sup>99</sup> Lincoln, “Pilgrimage and the New Testament”, 37.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, 40-3.

<sup>101</sup> Cragg, “Jesus, Jerusalem and Pilgrimage Today”, 6-7.



liturgical practice. However, these do not stop the real presence of travel for and within a Christian context.

The role of pilgrimage changed even within the context of the early church. Peter Walker identified changes across the first three centuries of Christianity as forming a single trajectory, one that widened the geographical scope of the Church and disregarded the significance of Jerusalem.<sup>102</sup> He viewed the fourth century as marking a change in the importance of the place of Jerusalem as particularly holy, inspired by Constantine and his need for unifying symbols of his new era of the united eastern and western Empire.<sup>103</sup> In addition to the changing status of the place Jerusalem, Christians developed a broader understanding of the sacral nature of place. Changes in the Holy Land concerning the development of relics and the promotion of sacred spaces were part of a wider picture, and influenced that picture. Engaging with these ideas, Bruria Bitton-Ashkelony's *Encountering the Sacred* considers a broad range of theological and monastic writings from the fourth and fifth centuries to outline the rise of ecclesiastical power in conjunction with the formation of a controlled, localized Christian landscape opposed to an overt Jerusalem-centric idea of sacred place.<sup>104</sup> There was a pull 'between local sites of pilgrimage on the one hand and Jerusalem on the other, as well as with the pervasive dilemma of sacred earthly journeying to encounter the divine versus interior journeying to an inner space'.<sup>105</sup> She repeatedly reminds her reader that the New Testament did not harbour ideas of pilgrimage, but that Church Fathers, and influential monks and bishops, were the advocates of local or

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<sup>102</sup> Walker, "Pilgrimage in the Early Church".

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., 77.

<sup>104</sup> Bruria Bitton-Ashkelony, *Encountering the Sacred: The Debate on Christian Pilgrimage in Late Antiquity*, The Transformation of the Classical Heritage (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., 4.

Palestinian pilgrimage, and at times both. They sought the maintenance or enhancement of their ecclesiastical power over that of their competitors, as well as the safety of those souls over whom they governed.

Bitton-Ashkelony noted that within monastic culture, pilgrimage to the monasteries and dwellings of charismatic holy men was a devotional act whereby the monk transformed himself into a more ascetic man, learning from the figure at the end of his journey.<sup>106</sup> The perpetual pilgrim could spiritually become an alien in this world by literally becoming a journeying foreigner. It is this concept that forms the heart of Maribel Dietz's *Wandering Monks, Virgins, and Pilgrims*, which examines religious travel between the fourth and eighth centuries with a focus on the earlier half of that period.<sup>107</sup> She argues that a life of movement came to form particular ascetic type of monastic detachment. Monastic travel mirrored the inner journey of the soul to God in heavenly Jerusalem.<sup>108</sup> Rather than traditional 'pilgrimage', Dietz is interested in the uniquely monastic and ascetic impulse to travel that sought spiritual fulfilment and was open to accusations of instability and dangerous ill-defined wandering.<sup>109</sup>

There is more to the intersection of theology and travel than pilgrimage. Travel can be theologized when it is missionary, when it is the result of religious persecution, when it is an act of worship, or when religious ideas create restrictions on travel. Spirituality can be thematically connected to many mundane aspects of life. The intersection of modern life and travel can be found in constructive theology, in which contemporary global, postcolonial, and social concerns are added to the interpretation of traditional

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid., 140-83.

<sup>107</sup> Maribel Dietz, *Wandering Monks, Virgins, and Pilgrims: Ascetic Travel in the Mediterranean World, A.D. 300-800* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005).

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., 35.

theological doctrines.<sup>110</sup> For the medieval period, too, there is more to travel and theology than pilgrimage. The Judeo-Christian tradition is steeped in mobility, as too were medieval Christian societies. Mobility extends beyond the single-minded focus of pilgrim activity, or routes, or trade, it was an ever-present facet of life. Thus breaking away from the traditional modes of exploring travel, this thesis contextualizes the systems that informed thinking and writing about travel to place textual evidence of mobility in an explanatory context. Away from an objective-based agenda, scholarship into travel and mobility can engage with the meaning and influence of movement across all aspects of society.

This thesis starts the process by looking at the textual record of mobility and factors that influenced how travel was used in the early medieval narrative tradition. It explores the social fact of mobility, informed by the practicalities of travel that have been outlined above. The textual narrative does not represent the reality of travel directly; instead, allegorical and theological ideas, as well as by other underlying social constructs, intervene on the role of travel in the textual record. These elements, all of which influence the meanings that could be applied to travel, are reflected back by the close reading of concepts of travel and mobility in the early Middle Ages.

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<sup>110</sup> See for example, Rieger, *Traveling*.

## 0.3. Sources and Method

The interpretation of travel in the writings of early medieval authors relies on an understanding of the intellectual framework within which they worked. The present thesis considers the ways that theological themes relating to travel were expressed by Bede and his contemporaries. These themes then provide insight into an intellectual and theological position that governed thinking about travel and movement. From this situation, the role of mobility within the eighth-century Northumbrian hagiographical corpus, incorporating texts written by Bede and his contemporaries, can be explored.

### 0.3.1. Sources

Bede, monk, priest, and scholar at Wearmouth and Jarrow from the age of seven, around 680, until his death in 735, is the author whose work survives most extensively. His surviving prose hagiographical works are *Vita Cuthberti* (VCP), on the life and miracles of Cuthbert (d.687), monk, hermit, and bishop of Lindisfarne, composed no later than 721,<sup>111</sup> and *Historia Abbatum* (HA), probably completed shortly after his abbot, Ceolfrith's, death in 716.<sup>112</sup> Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica* (HE), which he dates

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<sup>111</sup> Bede, *Vita Cuthberti* = *The Life of Cuthbert (prose)*, ed. and trans. Bertram Colgrave, *Two Lives of Saint Cuthbert: A Life by an Anonymous Monk of Lindisfarne and Bede's Prose Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1940), 141-307. VCP is dated to between 713 and 721, see Bertram Colgrave, *Two Lives of Saint Cuthbert: A Life by an Anonymous Monk of Lindisfarne and Bede's Prose Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1940), 16; Michael Lapidge, "Bede's Metrical *Vita S. Cuthberti*", in *St. Cuthbert, His Cult and His Community to A.D. 1200*, ed. Gerald Bonner, D. W. Rollason, and Clare Stancliffe (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1989), 77-93. More recently, Alan Thacker has proposed that it was composed around 714, see "Wilfrid, His Cult and His Biographer", in *Wilfrid, Abbot, Bishop, Saint: Papers from the 1300th Anniversary Conferences*, ed. Nicholas J. Higham (Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2013), 1-16, at 16.

<sup>112</sup> Bede, *Historia Abbatum* = *History of the Abbots*, ed. and trans. Christopher W. Grocock and Ian N. Wood, *Abbots of Wearmouth and Jarrow* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2013), 22-75. The norm is to date HA to the period 725-31, see for example Walter A. Goffart, *The Narrators of Barbarian History (A.D. 550-800): Jordanes, Gregory of Tours, Bede, and Paul the Deacon* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 277; Simon J. Coates, "Ceolfrid: History, Hagiography and Memory in Seventh- and Eighth-Century Wearmouth-Jarrow", *Journal of Medieval History* 25, no. 2 (1999): 69-86, at 72. This 'traditional' date of after 725 is based on the relationship between HA, the anonymous *Vita Ceolfridi*, and Bede's note on Ceolfrith's departure in his *Chronica Maiora*, which is contained within *De temporum ratione* (DTR), 66. Bede, *De temporum ratione* = *The Reckoning of Time*, ed. Charles W.

to 731, is his most substantial historical work.<sup>113</sup> The other named Northumbrian author of this period is Stephen of Ripon, known only through his hagiography of Wilfrid, bishop of York and Hexham. Stephen probably composed his *Vita Wilfridi* (VW) in 712 or 713.<sup>114</sup> Bede utilized VW in his HE, although he did not acknowledge it, and the differences between these two texts have led to various interpretations of the controversies that may have prompted both authors to write.<sup>115</sup> The earliest Northumbrian hagiography is probably the anonymous *Vita Cuthberti* (VCA), written between 699 and 705, following Cuthbert's death in 687.<sup>116</sup> Bede rewrote this *Vita*

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Jones, *Opera Didascalica (Beda Venerabilis)* CCSL 123B (Turnhout: Brepols, 1977), 263-544; trans. Faith Wallis, *Bede: The Reckoning of Time* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1999). Traditionally, *Vita Ceolfredi* was seen as an initial emotional response, and Bede's HA was the rational later response. However, Ian Wood challenged this, dating HA to 716-717 and the anonymous *Vita* after spring 717. He argues that Bede composed his work upon the return of those brethren who had travelled with Ceolfrið as far as Langres to Wearmouth-Jarrow, before the return of those who continued on to Rome, due to the absence of the papal letter in Bede's work that is present in the anonymous *Vita*. See 'Ian N. Wood, "The Foundation of Bede's Wearmouth-Jarrow", in *The Cambridge Companion to Bede*, ed. Scott DeGregorio (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 84-96, at 86-7; Christopher W. Grocock and Ian N. Wood, *Abbots of Wearmouth and Jarrow*, Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2013), xxi.

<sup>113</sup> Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum* = *Ecclesiastical History*, ed. and trans. Bertram Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969). HE v.23 in which Bede said: 'this is the state of the whole of Britain at the present time [...] in the year of our Lord 731'. *Hic est inpraesentiarum uniuersae status Britanniae [...] dominicae autem incarnationis anno DCCXXXI*.

<sup>114</sup> Stephen of Ripon, *Vita Wilfridi* = *Life of Wilfrid*, ed. and trans. Bertram Colgrave, *The Life of Bishop Wilfrid* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1927). Clare Stancliffe has shown Wilfrid's death to have fallen on 24 April 710, and Stephen to have subsequently completed VW between July 712 and March 714, see Clare Stancliffe, "Dating Wilfrid's Death and Stephen's Life", in *Wilfrid, Abbot, Bishop, Saint: Papers from the 1300th Anniversary Conferences*, ed. Nicholas J. Higham (Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2013), 17-26.

<sup>115</sup> Factional divisions between different sections of the Northumbrian church have been identified from the contrasts between these two texts. Tensions between Wilfridians and anti-Wilfridians was first argued for by David Kirby, and developed by Walter Goffart; see David P. Kirby, "Bede, Eddius Stephanus and the 'Life of Wilfrid'", *The English Historical Review* 98, no. 386 (1983): 101-14; Goffart, *Narrators*, 235-328. At the least, a sense of Wilfridians and anti-Wilfridians, or Lindisfarne, factions developing out of older 'Roman' and 'Irish' factions permeates scholarship, although the lines and terms of division are far from clear. The most recent substantial output on Wilfrid, an edited volume, broadly presents the tense relationship exaggerated by Goffart as limited to a short period of uncertainty, and characterizes Bede as broadly positive on Wilfrid; see various essays in Higham, *Wilfrid, Abbot, Bishop, Saint*.

<sup>116</sup> *Vita Cuthberti* = *Life of Cuthbert*, ed. and trans. Bertram Colgrave, *Two Lives of Saint Cuthbert: A Life by an Anonymous Monk of Lindisfarne and Bede's Prose Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1940), 59-139. VCA is dedicated to Eadfrith, bishop of Lindisfarne c. 698-721, and for the *terminus ante quem*, the text states that Aldfrith is currently reigning and so must have been completed before his death in 704-5, discussed by Colgrave, *Two Lives*, 13.

under a shifting political framework in the form of VCP.<sup>117</sup> The anonymous *Vita Ceolfridi* (VCeol) is a product of Wearmouth and Jarrow, composed soon after Ceolfrith's death in 716.<sup>118</sup> The anonymous *Vita Gregorii* (VG), produced between 704 and 714 at Whitby, is an intriguing addition to the Northumbrian corpus.<sup>119</sup> It is distinct from the rest of the surviving hagiographies regarding subject, focussing upon Pope Gregory the Great rather than a local ecclesiastical figure. However, it is situated squarely within the Northumbrian hagiographical tradition.<sup>120</sup>

Bede, and the other Northumbrian hagiographers, engaged with scriptural allegory within their narratives. As noted by Roger Ray when he championed Bede's exegetical commentaries and the role that they ought to play in shedding light on HE, 'exegesis was the driving force of all Bede's learning'.<sup>121</sup> His commentaries are understood to be concerned with the ordering of knowledge and its place in God's salvation rather

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<sup>117</sup> The rewriting is argued to have occurred for one of a range of reasons. Alan Thacker argued that Bede's rewriting of VCA reflects his desire for ecclesiastical reform; see "Bede's Ideal of Reform", in *Ideal and Reality in Frankish and Anglo-Saxon Society: Studies Presented to J.M. Wallace-Hadrill*, ed. Patrick Wormald, et al. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983), 130-53. Alternatively, Walter Goffart argued that it was a part of the wider factional politics of the early eighth century; see *Narrators*, 263-328. Walter Berschin noted the spiritual improvements that Bede made in "*Opus Deliberatum Ac Perfectum: Why Did the Venerable Bede Write a Second Prose Life of St. Cuthbert*", in *St. Cuthbert, His Cult and His Community to A.D. 1200*, ed. Gerald Bonner, D. W. Rollason, and Clare Stancliffe (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1989), 95-102; William Trent Foley, "Suffering and Sanctity in Bede's Prose Life of St. Cuthbert", *The Journal of Theological Studies* 50, no. 1 (1999): 102-16. Most recently, it has been noted that Bede's rewriting of the *vita* removed references to places outside of Lindisfarne's diocese, and may reflect upon Bede's interest in the proper rules of bishoprics; see A. Joseph McMullen, "Rewriting the Ecclesiastical Landscape of Early Medieval Northumbria in the Lives of Cuthbert", *Anglo-Saxon England* 43 (2014): 57-98.

<sup>118</sup> *Vita Ceolfridi = Life of Ceolfrith*, ed. and trans. Christopher W. Grocock and Ian N. Wood, *Abbots of Wearmouth and Jarrow* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2013), 77-121. Wood dated VCeol to 717, because of the inclusion of a papal letter brought back from Rome by those amongst Ceolfrith's companions who completed his journey and brought the gift of the Codex Amiatinus to the papacy, see above note 112 on the dating of HA for discussion.

<sup>119</sup> *Vita Gregorii = Life of Gregory*, ed. and trans. Bertram Colgrave, *The Earliest Life of Gregory the Great* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1968), 72-139. VG only survives in one manuscript copy; Colgrave outlines its dating in *The Earliest Life of Gregory the Great* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1968), 47-8, 55.

<sup>120</sup> Outlined by Brian Butler, "The Whitby Life of Gregory the Great: Exegesis and Hagiography" (PhD Thesis, University College Cork, 2005), 15-17.

<sup>121</sup> Roger Ray, "What Do We Know About Bede's Commentaries?", *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 49 (1982): 1-20.

than abstract exegesis. They also focus on pastoral instruction through scriptural interpretation.<sup>122</sup> Further, while some aspects of theology are removed from daily life, much of it impacted upon the experience of Christian communities.<sup>123</sup> Christian beliefs and the beliefs of Christians are not limited to the formal tenets of the Christian faith and Church. Culture and cultural ideas are absorbed as well as taught; they are acquired from social reality, practices, and interaction. There is a textual trace of these ideas in the written theology of homilies and commentaries. They can help in the interpretation of anecdotal narrative evidence. Thus, Bede's various scriptural commentaries have been employed with the intention of outlining the allegorical value of travel and movement.<sup>124</sup>

It is not possible to outline the exact chronology of Bede's exegetical works. Instead, for clarity, his works can be grouped into those of the 'young' and 'mature' Bede.<sup>125</sup> More recently, looking at Bede's eschatological thinking, Faith Wallis and Peter Darby proposed a five-part division, separated by defining moments in Bede's career.<sup>126</sup> However, the development of Bede's thinking is not the focus here, as the asides that engage with travel do not exhibit a particular changing or temporal dimension. Although, it is possible to note that Bede's 'mature' commentaries have more to say

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<sup>122</sup> Scott DeGregorio, "'Nostrorum Socordiam Temporum': The Reforming Impulse of Bede's Later Exegesis", *Early Medieval Europe* 11, no. 2 (2002): 107-22; "Bede's *In Ezram Et Neemiam* and the Reform of the Northumbrian Church", *Speculum* 79, no. 01 (2004): 1-25; Alan Thacker, "Bede and the Ordering of Understanding", in *Innovation and Tradition in the Writings of the Venerable Bede*, ed. Scott DeGregorio (Morgantown: West Virginia University Press, 2006), 37-63.

<sup>123</sup> For a recent examination of Anglo-Saxon theology in its social context, see Helen Foxhall Forbes, *Heaven and Earth in Anglo-Saxon England: Theology and Society in an Age of Faith*, Studies in Early Medieval Britain (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013).

<sup>124</sup> This thesis should be seen within the context of an increase in approaches to Bede's various scholarships as integrated. See for example the essays in Scott DeGregorio, *Innovation and Tradition in the Writings of the Venerable Bede*, Medieval European Studies (Morgantown: West Virginia University Press, 2006).

<sup>125</sup> See for example Thacker, "Ordering of Understanding".

<sup>126</sup> See the Introduction to Faith Wallis and Peter Darby, *Bede and the Future*, Studies in Early Medieval Britain and Ireland (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014).

on ideas of movement than his earlier works do. Bede composed his first commentary, *Expositio Apocalypseos* (*ExpApoc*), around 703.<sup>127</sup> *Expositio Actuum Apostolorum* (*ExpAct*) was composed close to 710.<sup>128</sup> At least parts of *In epistolas septem catholicas* (*EpistCath*), which contains seven short commentaries on the seven letters, were completed around the same time.<sup>129</sup> Bede's first Old Testament commentary has been proposed to be *In Cantica Canticorum* (*InCant*).<sup>130</sup> The year 716 signals a shift to Bede's 'mature' output. This year was marked in Bede's life by the departure and death of his abbot, Ceolfrith. Bede recorded this event and its impact in his *In primam partem Samuhelis* (*InSam*).<sup>131</sup> Composed contemporaneously to *InSam*, Bede's *In Regum librum XXX quaestiones* (*XXX quaest.*) is a series of responses to questions posed by Nothhelm, archpriest in London and later archbishop of Canterbury, about

<sup>127</sup> Bede, *Expositio Apocalypseos* = *Commentary on the Apocalypse*, ed. Roger Gryson, *Opera Exegetica (Bedaе Venerabilis)* CCSL 121A (Turnhout: Brepols, 2001); trans. Faith Wallis, *Bede: Commentary on Revelation* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2013). Bede wrote *ExpApoc* before *Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, which was addressed to Acca of Hexham as bishop, a position to which he succeeded in 710. An early date around 703 is preferred, because *ExpApoc* is associated with Bede's writing of a scientific work on time, in which he also dealt with apocalypticism. However, the only defining end date is 716, as discussed by Faith Wallis, *Bede: Commentary on Revelation*, Translated Texts for Historians (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2013), 39-57.

<sup>128</sup> Bede, *Expositio Actuum Apostolorum* = *Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, ed. M. L. W. Laistner, *Opera Exegetica (Bedaе Venerabilis)* CCSL 121 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1983), 1-163; trans. Lawrence T. Martin, *The Venerable Bede: Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles* (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1989). For the dating, see Max L. W. Laistner and Henry Hall King, *A Hand-List of Bede Manuscripts* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1943), 20. The commentary is addressed to Acca, bishop of Hexham, and so is dated to after the year of his succession in 710.

<sup>129</sup> Bede, *In epistolas septem catholicas* = *Commentary on the Seven Catholic Epistles*, David Hurst, *Opera Exegetica (Bedaе Venerabilis)* CCSL 121 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1983), 179-342; trans. David Hurst, *The Commentary on the Seven Catholic Epistles of Bede the Venerable* (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1985). For the dating, see Laistner and King, *Hand-List*, 31. Bede included the commentary on 1 John when he sent Acca *ExpAct*, the date of the others is unknown but their character aligns them with Bede's early New Testament work.

<sup>130</sup> Bede, *In Cantica Canticorum* = *On the Song of Songs*, ed. David Hurst, *Opera Exegetica (Bedaе Venerabilis)* CCSL 119B (Turnhout: Brepols, 1983), 167-375; trans. Arthur G. Holder, *On the Song of Songs and Selected Writings* (New York: Paulist Press, 2011). Arthur Holder has proposed that *InCant* was composed before 716, see *On the Song of Songs and Selected Writings*, The Classics of Western Spirituality (New York: Paulist Press, 2011), 28. Although the dating has long been considered uncertain, and the character of *InCant* has been seen to be in keeping with the work of Bede's mature years, see for example Thacker, "Ordering of Understanding", 59.

<sup>131</sup> Bede, *In primam partem Samuhelis* = *On the First book of Samuel*, ed. D. Hurst *Opera Exegetica (Bedaе Venerabilis)* CCSL 119 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1962), 5-287.



the Books of Kings.<sup>132</sup> He wrote *In Genesim (InGen)* in parts; its composition spanned the years 717-725.<sup>133</sup> Bede wrote *De tabernaculo (DTab)* in 721 or shortly afterwards,<sup>134</sup> *In Ezram et Neemiam (InEz)* sometime after 725,<sup>135</sup> and *De templo (DTemp)*, one of his final works, around 731.<sup>136</sup> These three works have been regarded as something of a trilogy.<sup>137</sup> Some of his *Homiliae euangelii (Hom.)* may have been written earlier in his career, however, the two-book structure and many of the individual homilies are likely to be dated to the final years of Bede's life.<sup>138</sup> Amongst them, one homily, i.13 on the feast of Benedict Biscop, is a useful reflection on

<sup>132</sup> Bede, *In Regum librum XXX quaestiones = Thirty Questions on the Book of Kings*, ed. David Hurst, *Opera Exegetica (Bedaе Venerabilis)* CCSL 119 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1962), 289-322; trans. William Trent Foley, in *Bede: A Biblical Miscellany*, ed. William Trent Foley and Arthur G. Holder (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1999), 81-143. Traditionally dated to around 725 by Laistner and King, *Hand-List*, 62, Paul Meyvaert dated it to around 713-717, the period between Bede's starting and finishing of his commentary on Samuel. See "The Date of Bede's *Thirty Questions on the Book of Kings* to Nothelm", in *The Limits of Ancient Christianity: Essays on Late Antique Thought and Culture in Honor of R. A. Markus*, ed. William E. Klingshirn and Mark Vessey (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997), 267-86.

<sup>133</sup> Calvin Kendall dates the work as follows: Books 1a and 1b to 717-8, Book 2 to around 720, and the full four Books to 722-725, see *Bede: On Genesis*, Translated Texts for Historians (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2008), 45-53.

<sup>134</sup> Bede, *De tabernaculo = On the Tabernacle*, ed. David Hurst, *Opera Exegetica (Bedaе Venerabilis)* CCSL 119A (Turnhout: Brepols, 1969), 1-139; trans. Arthur G. Holder, *Bede: On the Tabernacle* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1994). Arthur Holder dated it to around 721-725, see *Bede: On the Tabernacle*, Translated Texts for Historians (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1994), xvi.

<sup>135</sup> Bede, *In Ezram et Neemiam = On Ezra and Nehemiah*, ed. David Hurst, *Opera Exegetica (Bedaе Venerabilis)* CCSL 119A (Turnhout: Brepols, 1969), 235-392; trans. Scott DeGregorio, *Bede: On Ezra and Nehemiah* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2006). There is a case for an earlier date, between 711-715, espoused by Paul Meyvaert, "The Date of Bede's in Ezram and His Image of Ezra in the Codex Amiatinus", *Speculum* 80, no. 04 (2005): 1087-133. However, the case for the later date is more widely accepted. For an overview of the debate, see Scott DeGregorio, *Bede: On Ezra and Nehemiah*, Translated Texts for Historians (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2006), xxxvii-xlii.

<sup>136</sup> Bede, *De templo = On the Temple*, ed. David Hurst, *Opera Exegetica (Bedaе Venerabilis)* CCSL 119A (Turnhout: Brepols, 1969), 141-234; trans. Seán Connolly, *Bede: On the Temple* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1995). The dating of *DTemp* has long been known by a comment that Bede made in his *Epistola ad Albinum*, which he sent along with a copy of HE to Albinus, abbot of St Augustine's, Canterbury. It stated that he included the *nuper* (recently) published *DTemp*, see Laistner and King, *Hand-List*, 75. For the text of the *epistola*: Bede, *Epistola ad Albinum = Letter to Albinus* ed. and trans. Joshua A. Westgard "New Manuscripts of Bede's Letter to Albinus". *Revue Bénédictine* 120, no. 2 (2010): 208-215.

<sup>137</sup> DeGregorio, *Ezra*, xiii; Thacker, "Ordering of Understanding", 54-5.

<sup>138</sup> Bede, *Homiliae euangelii = Homilies on the Gospels*, ed. David Hurst, *Opera Homiletica. Opera Rhythmica (Bedaе Venerabilis)* CCSL 122 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1955), 1-378; trans. Lawrence T. Martin and David Hurst, *Homilies on the Gospels*, 2 vols. (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1991).

travel.<sup>139</sup> Finally, several of Bede's exegetical works cannot be accurately dated; those used in this thesis are *Expositio Bedae presbyteri in Canticum Habacuc (InHab)*,<sup>140</sup> and *De VIII quaestionibus (VIII quaest.)*.<sup>141</sup>

Bede largely wrote his scriptural exegesis for a monastic audience. He was keenly interested in the pastoral role of clerics.<sup>142</sup> Indeed, it has often been noted that Bede's approach to theology and exegesis was more practical than that of his exemplar, Gregory the Great.<sup>143</sup> Thus it would be an oversight to assume that there was no connection between how Bede interpreted scripture, and how the preachers and teachers of the Northumbrian Church influenced the religious experience of everyday life. What Bede said regarding ideas of mobility or fixity was meant to move or still the monks and clergy, and to influence the wider faithful. These ideas also underpin Bede's thoughts about the external world, as expressed in HE and his hagiographical works.

For certain aspects of this study, an expanded corpus of hagiographies that includes some of the writings produced by Anglo-Saxons in Francia during the eighth century provides a wider context for the depiction of travel. The expanded corpus moves the

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<sup>139</sup> *Hom.*, i.13 has been edited and translated separately by Christopher W. Grocock, and Ian N. Wood, *Abbots of Wearmouth and Jarrow* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2013), 2-19. This translation and division of text is referenced when this homily is discussed, see Chapter 1.2 in particular.

<sup>140</sup> Bede, *Expositio Bedae presbyteri in Canticum Habacuc = Commentary of Bede the Priest on the Canticle of Habakkuk*, ed. J. E. Hudson, *Opera Exegetica (Beda Venerabilis)* CCSL 119B (Turnhout: Brepols, 1983), 370-409; trans. Seán Connolly, *Bede: On Tobit and on the Canticle of Habakkuk* (Dublin, Ireland: Four Courts Press, 1997), 65-96.

<sup>141</sup> Bede, *De VIII quaestionibus = On Eight Questions*, ed. Michael Gorman, "Bede's *VIII Quaestiones* and Carolingian Biblical", *Revue Bénédictine* 109 (1999), 62-74; trans. Arthur G. Holder, in *Bede: A Biblical Miscellany*, ed. William Trent Foley and Arthur G. Holder (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1999), 145-165.

<sup>142</sup> Thacker, "Ideal of Reform"; "Monks, Preaching and Pastoral Care in Early Anglo-Saxon England", in *Pastoral Care before the Parish*, ed. John Blair and Richard Sharpe (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1992), 137-70.

<sup>143</sup> Scott DeGregorio, "The Venerable Bede and Gregory the Great: Exegetical Connections, Spiritual Departures", *Early Medieval Europe* 18, no. 1 (2010): 43-60. See also, Paul Meyvaert, *Bede and Gregory the Great*, Jarrow Lecture (Jarrow: St Paul's Church, 1964).

texts and their contexts out of a Northumbrian milieu to include writers (and their subjects) from Wessex living in Francia. Concerning both time and geography, this provides a bridge between Bede and Alcuin (d.804), who moved from the school at York to the palace school at Aachen and the service of King, later Emperor, Charlemagne (d.814). Thus, examining the epistolary corpuses of Boniface, a leading figure in Anglo-Saxon missionary work whose own mission ran from 716 until his martyrdom in 754, and Alcuin allows for comparisons of language and allegory to be expanded to consider the full extent of the eighth century.<sup>144</sup> The hagiographical corpus associated with Anglo-Saxon missionaries includes that of the original missionary to the Frisians, the Northumbrian Willibrord (d.739), as well as Boniface and Willibald of Eichstätt (d.787), one of Boniface's many relatives who followed him into the missionary field and the first Anglo-Saxon known to have travelled to the Holy Land. The texts considered in this thesis include Willibald of Mainz's *Vita Bonifatii*, Hygeburg of Heidenheim's *Vita Willibaldi* also known as the *Hodoeporicon*, and Alcuin's *Vita Willibrordi*. Willibald of Mainz and his subject were both from Wessex, as were Hygeburg and her subject.<sup>145</sup> Willibald was commissioned and wrote *Vita Bonifatii* before 769.<sup>146</sup> Willibald's *Vita Bonifatii* influenced Hygeburg. Her *Vita Willibaldi*, concerning the life and travels of Willibald of Eichstätt, was composed

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<sup>144</sup> Boniface, *Epistolae* = *Letters*, ed. Michael Tangl, *Die Briefe des heiligen Bonifatius und Lullus* MGH *Epistolae selectae* 1 (Berlin: 1916); trans. Ephraim Emerton, *The Letters of Saint Boniface* (1940, reprinted 1973). Alcuin, *Epistolae* = *Letters*, ed. Ernest Dümmler, *Epistolae Karolini aevi (II)* MGH *Epistolae* 4, (Hannover: 1895), 1-481; selected letters trans. Stephen Allott, *Alcuin of York, c. A.D. 732 to 804: His Life and Letters* (York: William Sessions, 1974).

<sup>145</sup> Their hagiographies show the influence of Aldhelm's Latin prose style, discussed by Palmer, *Frankish World*, 29-30.

<sup>146</sup> Willibald, *Vita Bonifatii* = *Life of Boniface*, ed. Wilhelm Levison, *Vitae sancti Bonifatii archiepiscopi Moguntini* MGH *Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum separatim editi* 57 (Hannover: 1905), 1-58; trans. C. H. Talbot, in *Soldiers of Christ*, ed. Thomas F. X. Noble and Thomas Head (London: Sheed & Ward, 1995), 107-40. *Vita Bonifatii* was written before the resignation of Megingoz of Wurzburg in 769, discussed by Palmer, *Frankish World*, 29.

before Willibald's death in 787.<sup>147</sup> Alcuin composed his *Vita Willibrordi* around 796. He and his missionary subject, Willibrord, were both Northumbrians thus his work has a different context from that of Willibald and Hygeburg.<sup>148</sup> These hagiographies provide comparisons for language use and the contexts in which long-distance travel was included in hagiography.

This thesis presents an alternative comparison in Hiberno-Latin hagiography. The potential for close textual interaction between Bede and Irish authors might be best seen with regards to *De Locis Sanctis*, written by Adomnán (d.704), abbot of Iona, and revised by Bede in his own *De Locis Sanctis* (DLS).<sup>149</sup> Both versions of *De Locis Sanctis* provide a survey of the sites of the Holy Land, the details of which stem from both the writings of the Church Fathers and the eyewitness testimony of Arculf, a bishop from Gaul, and in Bede's case derived from Adomnán's account.<sup>150</sup> These

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<sup>147</sup> Hygeburg, *Vita Willibaldi* = *The Life of Willibald*, ed. Oswald Holder-Egger, [*Supplementa tomorum I-XII, pars III. Supplementum tomi XIII*] MGH Scriptores 15.1 (Hannover: 1887), 86-106; trans. C. H. Talbot, in *Soldiers of Christ*, ed. Thomas F. X. Noble and Thomas Head (London: Sheed & Ward, 1995), 143-64. The terminus ante quem dating is discussed by Palmer, *Frankish World*, 29-30.

<sup>148</sup> Alcuin, *Vita Willibrordi* = *Life of Willibrord*, ed. Wilhelm Levison, *Passiones vitaeque sanctorum aevi Merovingici (V)* MGH Scriptores rerum Merovingicarum 7 (Hannover: 1920), 81-144; trans. C. H. Talbot, in *Soldiers of Christ*, ed. Thomas F. X. Noble and Thomas Head (London: Sheed & Ward, 1995), 191-211. The significance of 796 and its relation to the composition of *Vita Willibrordi* is outlined by Ian N. Wood, *The Missionary Life: Saints and the Evangelisation of Europe, 400-1050*, Medieval World (Harlow: Longman, 2001), 85-6.

<sup>149</sup> Adomnán, *De locis sanctis* = *On the Holy Places*, ed. and trans. Denis Molaise Meehan, *Adamnan's De Locis Sanctis* Scriptores Latini Hiberniae (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1958). Bede, *De locis sanctis* = *On the Holy Places*, ed. J. Fraipont, *Itineraria et alia geographica* CCSL 175 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1965), 245-80; trans. William Trent Foley, in *Bede: A Biblical Miscellany*, ed. William Trent Foley and Arthur G. Holder (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1999), 1-25.

<sup>150</sup> The scholarly process that has raised the profile of Adomnán as author and composer of *De Locis Sanctis*, rather than simply the recorder of Arculf's travelogue, has created doubts about the very existence of Arculf. Thomas O'Loughlin casts doubts upon all details provided by Bede and Adomnán concerning Arculf and his meeting with Adomnán, and notes the mistakes or confusions in Arculf's descriptions, see *Adomnán and the Holy Places: The Perceptions of an Insular Monk on the Locations of the Biblical Drama* (London: T & T Clark, 2007), 61-3. He argues that the 'Arculf' found in the text is a composite, and that it is not possible to prove or disprove the historical person of Arculf. David Woods took this scepticism in another direction, arguing that Arculf and Adomnán never met. He proposed that Adomnán came across a manuscript compiled in Constantinople by an 'Arnulf' on the life of Constantine, and misinterpreted it to mean that 'Arnulf' had visited the places in the Holy Land. See David Woods, "Arculf's Luggage: The Sources for Adomnán's 'De Locis Sanctis'", *Ériu* 52 (2002): 25-52; "On the Circumstances of Adomnán's Composition of *De Locis Sanctis*", in *Adomnán of Iona*:

works are primarily an aid to exegesis, providing access to the landscape in which the Bible was set.<sup>151</sup> Although the evident product of movement, these texts are not a central focus of this thesis owing to their emphasis on the meaning of sacred places rather than the journey between them.<sup>152</sup>

Instead, Hiberno-Latin hagiographical texts provide a basis for comparison when it comes to the presentation of travel. Texts from the three largest traditions, those of Patrick, Brigit, and Columba, are considered. Adomnán's *Vita Columbae* emanates from, at least in part, the same hagiographical and literary environment as the Northumbrian texts. In around 700, Adomnán wrote about the founder of his monastery, Columba, who was credited with bringing Christianity to Scotland.<sup>153</sup> Adomnán drew on the lost Latin collection of Columban miracles known as *De uirtutibus sancti Columbae*, composed around 640 by Cumméne Find, a previous abbot of Iona.<sup>154</sup> The *vita* should be seen as a product of the hagiographical traditions

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*Theologian, Lawmaker, Peacemaker*, ed. Jonathan M. Wooding (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2010), 193-204. There are also more positive reassessments of *De Locis Sanctis* that highlight the genuine information about the near east in the seventh century. These views prefer to see Adomnán's authorship as a negotiation of different materials, rather than in relation to being wholly faithful to Arculf, or wholly a construct, see Rodney Aist, "Adomnán, Arculf and the Source Material of *De Locis Sanctis*", in *Adomnán of Iona: Theologian, Lawmaker, Peacemaker*, ed. Jonathan M. Wooding (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2010), 162-80; Robert G. Hoyland and Sarah Waidler, "Adomnán's *De Locis Sanctis* and the Seventh-Century Near East", *The English Historical Review* 129, no. 539 (2014): 787-807.

<sup>151</sup> Adomnán's *De Locis Sanctis* as an exegetical exposition has been argued most strongly by Thomas O'Loughlin, "The Exegetical Purpose of Adomnán's *De Locis Sanctis*", *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies* 24 (1993): 37-53; "Res, Tempus, Locus, Persona: Adomnán's Exegetical Method", *The Innes Review* 48, no. 2 (1997): 95-111; *Adomnán and the Holy Places*. O'Loughlin also argued that Adomnán's *De Locis Sanctis* had a wider range of purposes, including a liturgical role in "The *De Locis Sanctis* as a Liturgical Text", in *Adomnán of Iona: Theologian, Lawmaker, Peacemaker*, ed. Jonathan M. Wooding (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2010), 181-92.

<sup>152</sup> The meaning of travel in these texts, and in Bede's extracts from DLS in HE v.15-17, is explored in Chapter 3.2.

<sup>153</sup> Adomnán, *Vita Columbae = Life of Columba*, ed. and trans. Alan Orr Anderson and Marjorie Ogilvie Anderson, *Adomnán's Life of Columba* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991). The broad date range, 697-704, is framed by a reference within *Vita Columbae*, ii.25 to the Synod of Birr, 697, and Adomnán's death in 704. Discussed by J. M. Picard, "The Purpose of Adomnán's *Vita Columbae*", *Peritia* 1 (1982): 160-77.

<sup>154</sup> Maire Herbert, *Iona, Kells and Derry: The History and Hagiography of the Monastic Familia of Columba* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 13; James E. Fraser, "Adomnán, Cumméne Ailbe, and the Picts", *Peritia* 17-18 (2003-4): 183-98.

of both Ireland and northern Britain, with stylistic features derived from patristic historians.<sup>155</sup> There are two extant hagiographies of Patrick, the fifth-century Romano-British missionary and bishop in Ireland. These date from the second half of the seventh century, possibly from its closing decade, and are Muirchú's *Vita Patricii*, and Tírechán's *Collectanea de sancto Patricio*.<sup>156</sup> The two earliest *vitae* of Brigit of Kildare probably date to the seventh and eighth centuries. These are the so-called *Vita prima*, and Cogitosus's *Vita Brigitae*.<sup>157</sup> Cogitosus is accepted to have written around 650.<sup>158</sup> The date of *Vita prima* is more heavily debated. There is a *terminus ante quem*:

<sup>155</sup> Amongst others, see J. M. Picard, "The Purpose of Adomnán's *Vita Columbae*", *Peritia* 1 (1982): 160-77; "Bede, Adomnán and the Writing of History", *Peritia* 3 (1984): 50-70; David W. Rollason, "Hagiography and Politics in Early Northumbria", in *Holy Men and Holy Women: Old English Prose Saints' Lives and Their Contexts*, ed. Paul E. Szarmach (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996), 95-114; James E. Fraser, *From Caledonia to Pictland: Scotland to 795* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009); Jonathan M. Wooding, *Adomnán of Iona: Theologian, Lawmaker, Peacemaker* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2010). *Vita Columbae* was composed to create a common cause for the monastery at Iona and to glorify the patron saint. Adomnán intended his work to be read beyond the bounds of Iona's dominion, on the Continent and within Northumbria. Alternatively, Thomas Owen Clancy perceives subtle elements of Irish and Dalriadan politics, and pastoral aims towards his community, see "Personal, Political, Pastoral: The Multiple Agenda of Adomnán's Life of St. Columba", in *The Polar Twins*, ed. Edward J. Cowan and Douglas Gifford (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1999), 39-60.

<sup>156</sup> Muirchú, *Vita Patricii* = *Life of Patrick*, ed. and trans. Ludwig Bieler and Fergus Kelly, *The Patrician Texts in the Book of Armagh* *Scriptores Latini Hiberniae* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1979), 63-123. Tírechán, *Collectanea de sancto Patricio* = *History of Saint Patrick*, ed. and trans. Ludwig Bieler and Fergus Kelly, *The Patrician Texts in the Book of Armagh*, *Scriptores Latini Hiberniae* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1979), 124-67. Muirchú was a contemporary of Adomnán. He wrote his *Vita* at the command of a Bishop Aed of Sléibte. Both Muirchú and Aed's names appear in the list of ecclesiastics at the Synod of Birr, along with Adomnán, and Aed is believed to have died around 700. The *Vita* is dated to the period 661-700. Little is known about Tírechán, but his *Collectanea* is understood to be a product of the same rough period. It is proposed that the plague in 668 occurred while Tírechán was writing, because he noted a current plague in the *Collectanea*, although other plagues recorded in *The Annals of Ulster*, s.a. 680 (AD 682) or 700 may be that which was referenced. Its priority or otherwise over Muirchú's text is much debated; the elder of the two texts is not clear, but they served different purposes. For both, see Ludwig Bieler and Fergus Kelly, *The Patrician Texts in the Book of Armagh*, *Scriptores Latini Hiberniae* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1979), 1-2 for Muirchú, and 41-3 for Tírechán. Both are plausibly products of the latter part of this window; Dáibhi Ó Cróinín dates Tírechán's text to 690 and Muirchú's to 700, see *Early Medieval Ireland: 400-1200*, Longman History of Ireland (London: Longman, 1995), 3.

<sup>157</sup> *Vita prima Brigitae* = *First Life of Brigit*, ed. in *Februarii I* (1-6) *Acta Sanctorum* 3 Société des Bollandistes (Brepols); translation based on unpublished edition by Seán Connolly, "Vita Prima Sanctae Brigitae Background and Historical Value", *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* 119, (1989): 5-49.

<sup>158</sup> Seán Connolly and J. M. Picard, "Cogitosus's "Life of St Brigit" Content and Value", *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* 117 (1987): 5-27. The dating of Cogitosus's *Vita* is not dependent on whether *Vita prima* is older or younger than it is.

the earliest surviving manuscript for it dates from around 850, and it is not the archetype.<sup>159</sup> *Vita prima* and Cogitosus's *Vita* share some material. Some scholars argue that the Bollandists' attribution of '*vita prima*' is correct, that it is the older of the two and therefore the earliest surviving Hiberno-Latin hagiography.<sup>160</sup> Others, however, argue that it is the younger and used Cogitosus as one of its sources.<sup>161</sup> It also bears a close relationship to the ninth-century Old Irish *Bethu Brigte*, with which it shares most of its episodes and wording. Seán Connolly proposed that *Vita prima* and *Bethu Brigte* share a common source that was written in the eighth century.<sup>162</sup> The Hiberno-Latin sources, therefore, cluster to the decades directly preceding the Northumbrian corpus, with Brigantine outliers in either direction. As a comparison, they are not an exact match but provide a valuable alternative perspective.

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<sup>159</sup> The earliest surviving copy is found in British Library Additional MS 34124, dated to the ninth century and of continental production, as discussed by Seán Connolly, "Vita Prima Sanctae Brigidae Background and Historical Value", *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* 119 (1989): 5-49, at 6.

<sup>160</sup> Argued by Richard Sharpe, who highlights instances where Cogitosus appears to have elaborated on and improved the simpler text of *Vita prima*; see "*Vitae S Brigidae: The Oldest Texts*", *Peritia* 1 (1982): 81-106, at 89-92. He proposed that Cogitosus wrote at Kildare for a Kildare audience interested in the greatness of Kildare and holiness of its patron, whilst *Vita prima* is a 'national life' with wider interests.

<sup>161</sup> Felim Ó Briain pointed out that if *Vita prima* comes after Cogitosus's *Vita* it chose to use all of Cogitosus's episodes, whereas if it were the other way around, there is no easily discernible pattern to Cogitosus's selection of episodes from the anonymous life, see "Brigitana", *Zeitschrift Fur Celtische Philologie* 36 (1978): 112-37. Kim McCone outlines the structural case for borrowings only flowing from Cogitosus's *Vita* to *Vita prima*, as it is chaotic in its use of some of Cogitosus's material. He sees no reason why Cogitosus would chose to use the jumble of material over other episodes, see "Brigit in the Seventh Century: A Saint with Three Lives?", *Peritia* 1 (1982): 107-45, at 127-31. He maintains that Cogitosus's *Vita* was a product of the third quarter of the seventh century, and proposes *Vita prima* was composed in the first half of the eighth century.

<sup>162</sup> "Vita Prima", 6.

### 0.3.2. Method

#### 0.3.2a. Mobility

Mobility has become an evocative keyword for the twenty-first century and a powerful discourse that creates its own effects and contexts. The concept of mobilities encompasses both the large-scale movements of people, objects, capital and information across the world, as well as the more local processes of daily transportation, movement through public space and the travel of material things within everyday life. Issues of movement, of too little movement or too much or of the wrong sort or at the wrong time, are central to many lives, organisations and governments.<sup>163</sup>

Working from this perspective, in Geography and the Social Sciences there has been an increase in the prominence of Mobilities or the ‘New Mobilities Paradigm’. As a research approach, it was identified and rationalized as a single framework in the mid-2000s. Mobilities challenges what it perceives as the relatively immobile research of Social Sciences.<sup>164</sup> Within Social Sciences, many theoreticians tend to view mobility as something other than the norm. It has been viewed negatively in contrast to the fixity and boundedness of place and territory.<sup>165</sup> The principal logic of Mobilities challenges this. It focusses on, and holds at its centre, the geographical fact of movement. Mobilities connects a broad range of research fields and scales by this single fact.<sup>166</sup> John Urry is a key early mobilizer of Mobilities. His work focusses on the importance of mobility: society and identity are products of networks of people,

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<sup>163</sup> Kevin Hannam, Mimi Sheller, and John Urry, “Mobilities, Immobilities and Moorings”, *Mobilities* 1, no. 1 (2006): 1-22, at 1.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

<sup>165</sup> For the ‘classic’ arguments on place and territory, see for example Yi-fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977).

<sup>166</sup> Tim Cresswell, “Mobilities I: Catching Up”, *Progress in Human Geography* 35, no. 4 (2011): 550-58.



ideas, and things moving, rather than shared space.<sup>167</sup> *Mobilities* urges scholars not to take fixity and boundedness for granted.<sup>168</sup>

It is not only modern movement that has been understudied. In medieval writing, society is usually presented as a series of static people and places.<sup>169</sup> Travel and movement, when they are noted, are a means to those static actions and locations. Working within the *Mobilities* paradigm, one begins by assuming movement and challenging research to engage with it. From this position, potential avenues of investigation include issues of movement incorporating the routes and organization of travel, and political oversight of it; the social response to movement, both of the self and of others; and concepts of mobility from all points in society, from the micro-journey to the trans-continental. *Mobilities* encourage thinking about the interconnected nature of humans, ideas, and objects that move, and how they enable or hinder one another. Recognising the interconnected nature of society is as important for understanding the medieval world as it is for the modern.

*Mobilities* is a broad approach to enquiry and analysis, primarily seeking to challenge the understanding of society as ‘a-mobile’.<sup>170</sup> Tim Cresswell has described *Mobilities*

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<sup>167</sup> John Urry, *Sociology Beyond Societies: Mobilities for the Twenty-First Century* (London: Routledge, 2000); *Mobilities* (Cambridge: Polity, 2007).

<sup>168</sup> Cresswell, “*Mobilities I*”, 551.

<sup>169</sup> For example, Peregrine Horden discusses the predominantly static Middle Ages syndrome, which places emphasis on the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as the period of transition to the mobile world of the modern era, primarily thanks to an approach to mobility that looks back to its origin. He identifies the various problematic elements of the medieval period: the small scale of evidence encouraging individual travellers to be seen as anecdotal, extreme, or untypical; the inherent bias in evidence towards certain types of travellers to be wealthy; and the pervasiveness of the myth of the self-sustained, immobile European village. See “Towards a History of Medieval Mobility”, in *Freedom of Movement in the Middle Ages*, ed. Peregrine Horden (Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2007), xvii-xxxiv.

<sup>170</sup> Jon Shaw and Markus Hesse, “Transport, Geography and the ‘New’ Mobilities”, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 35, no. 3 (2010): 305-12, at 305.

as a blank space, and an alternative to place, boundedness, and stability.<sup>171</sup> As a framework, Mobilities provides a useful structure for the non-traditional study of travel engaged with by the present thesis. Instead of framing early medieval travel with the assumption of fixity and the question of place, Mobilities encourages an assumption of movement as fact, and engagement with the meaning of mobility. Mobilities fills the gap in traditional transport geography and studies of travel. It goes beyond simply finding transport activities to form a framework that can allow for the interpretation of the conditions that generate movement, how travel is experienced, and the implications of movement for politics, economics, and society.<sup>172</sup> The present thesis fits into this framework. This research provides interpretations of the meaning, representation, and experience of travel through text and narrative. This thesis interprets how those experiences of travel are mediated across time and through texts to an audience in the present. Movement in the early medieval period engaged with the embodied nature of travel, but it is expressed within a framework of narrative, theology, and social meaning. The experience of travel with which scholarship can engage is the experience of the textual traveller. This thesis understands Mobilities to provide a context for exploring the textual response to movement and concepts of mobility emanating from the narrative framework.

Mobilities allows for and encourages the link between transport and other aspects of society. The theme of mobility emerges from diversity in scholarship.<sup>173</sup> In medieval research, one should likewise be encouraged to connect movement with other aspects

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<sup>171</sup> Tim Cresswell, *On the Move: Mobility in the Modern Western World* (London: Routledge, 2006), 2-3. In *On the Move*, Cresswell provides a series of case studies, demonstrating the range of flexibility within the Mobilities paradigm, when applied to aspects of the modern world.

<sup>172</sup> Jon Shaw and Markus Hesse, "Transport, Geography and the 'New' Mobilities", 307.

<sup>173</sup> Tim Cresswell and Peter Merriman, *Geographies of Mobilities: Practices, Spaces, Subjects* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011).

of society, with a multiplicity of people, spaces, and practices. Different types of enacting movement, mobile practices, have become associated with different ways of thinking, and this thesis explores this for early medieval Northumbria. *Mobilities* encourages research and researchers to think about movement away from a singular concern with the function of travel, away from prioritizing its organization. The meaning of enacting movement as distilled from early medieval narrative sources allows for travel to be understood as an integrated and integral facet of society. Through a consideration of those moments in Northumbrian hagiographies concerned with travel, mobility can be understood not just for the exceptional moments of privileged travel, it is also reflected off the surfaces of other interactions in meaningful ways. It is possible to appreciate society and people as inherently moving rather than discarding travel to its own category.

Those who move, their experiences and practices, and what happens on the move are central to *Mobilities* geographers. For scholars of modern mobility, commuters and migrants, or the users of airports and car parks can be asked about their experiences embodying movement, how they transform infrastructure into action. When it comes to the medieval world, the records of the past, and primarily narratives, provide a translucent window. It is through these texts that we seek to understand more than infrastructure, roads and ports, more than how one prepared for a grand journey. Experience and engagement with travel is understood through the mouthpieces of our medieval authors. It is therefore through consideration of the meaning of movement, and the ways of thinking that it embodies, that one can take the study of medieval movement outside of the constraints of spatiality and functionality.

## 0.3.2b. Allegory

Allegory is a mechanism of interpretation; it can be a philosophical, religious, or literary mode of expression. Non-literal meaning is constructed and conveyed by one idea or entity that represents another. Allegory takes two broad forms: it is a hermeneutic approach, a reading strategy that labels and interprets texts; and it is a rhetorical trope and the intentional use of abstraction. In the case of this thesis, and of Bede's work, allegory is to be understood primarily as a reading strategy, the exegetical means of explaining the deeper meaning of scriptural texts. The harmonization of the Old and New Testaments through allegory was sanctioned by Paul in his epistle to the Galatians, and given authoritative exposition by Augustine.<sup>174</sup> The divinely inspired word was thought to have a literal meaning, an outer covering, concealing a deeper, hidden, spiritual meaning.

'Allegory' can designate a technique of interpretation within a multi-layered system of biblical exegesis that sees scriptural verses interpreted at the literal or historical level, and again at the higher spiritual or allegorical level.<sup>175</sup> Where literal readings explained and clarified the historical complexities of the biblical past, scribal

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<sup>174</sup> In Galatians 4.22-7, Paul, influenced by Jewish hermeneutics, used the term and method of allegory in his interpretation of the Genesis story of Abraham, Sarah, and Hagar; he interpreted the two sons of Abraham as two types of relationship with God. Christian writers applied allegorical principles in this model, and developed new and contrasting approaches from the second century onward. For the Latin west, biblical hermeneutics crystallized following the Augustinian tradition, which was established in *De Doctrina Christiana* = *On Christian Doctrine*, ed. and trans. R. P. H. Green, *Augustine De Doctrina Christiana*, Oxford Early Christian Texts (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001, 1995). Further, allegory as a rhetorical feature in contrast to the reading approach can also be evidenced in Augustine's writing. Therese Fuhrer argues that the autobiographical part of Augustine's *Confessions* ought also to be read allegorically in this way, and that Augustine wrote a series of signs into this portion of the text, see "Allegorical Reading and Writing in Augustine's Confessions", in *'In Search of Truth': Augustine, Manichaeism and Other Gnosticism*, ed. Jacob Albert van den Berg, Annemaré Kotzé, Tobias Nicklas and Madeleine Scopello (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 25-46. Thus, the range encompassed in the concept of allegory is exhibited by Augustine's writings.

<sup>175</sup> Discussed by John J. O'Keefe and R. R. Reno, *Sanctified Vision: An Introduction to Early Christian Interpretation of the Bible* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), 89-113. For the classic study of medieval approaches to the bible, see Beryl Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1952).

differences and the differing versions of scripture, and human fallibility in expressing divine reality, allegorical interpretations explain the deeper meaning of the text. The twofold division of interpretation into literal and spiritual transformed over time into a fourfold outline of the interpretative senses of biblical texts, one literal and three spiritual: typological, with reference to Christ or the Church; tropological or moral; and anagogical, referring to the reward of heaven.<sup>176</sup>

Bede used allegory as a tool of biblical exegesis alongside literal interpretation.<sup>177</sup>

Calvin Kendall outlined that Bede practised the three distinct methods of allegorical interpretation: figural, numerical, and etymological.<sup>178</sup> When interpreting scripture in his commentaries, Bede engaged in a flexible method; multiple things could hold the same meaning or a single entity could engage a multitude of interpretation. He understood that it was the responsibility of the commentator to unveil meaning in scripture.

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<sup>176</sup> Henri de Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis: The Four Senses of Scripture*, trans. E. M. Macierowski, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 2000), 2:33-9.

<sup>177</sup> Here he is traditionally viewed as having differed from the Canterbury school under Hadrian and Theodore, which favoured the literal interpretation of the Antiochene school of commentary, see Bernhard Bischoff and Michael Lapidge, *Biblical Commentaries from the Canterbury School of Theodore and Hadrian* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 243-9. Bede is typically argued to have favoured the Alexandrian school, following Augustine, see for example George Hardin Brown, *A Companion to Bede* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2009), 35. Although, Frances Young has argued that the distinction between Alexandrians and Antiochenes is misleading in the wider debates of biblical exegesis. She argues that Antiochene exegesis was not the anticipation of historical criticism that it is sometime seen as, but a protest against 'esoteric philosophical deductions', in *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 161-85, particularly 182). Further, ongoing work by Emma Vosper is highlighting that an interpretation of the Canterbury school as Antiochene is based on a selective reading of a limited selection of the Canterbury Commentaries and that their interpretative framework was more wide-ranging, see "Bede and the Canterbury School" (PhD Thesis, University of Nottingham, Forthcoming).

<sup>178</sup> Calvin B. Kendall, *Bede: On Genesis* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2007), 8-14, see also *Allegory of the Church: Romanesque Portals and Their Verse Inscriptions* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 9-13. Elsewhere, he shows how Bede's use of the language of *mysterium*, *allegoria*, *arcanum*, and *sacramentum* are related but not synonymous ways of reading the spiritual sense of scripture. See "The Responsibility of *Auctoritas*: Method and Meaning in Bede's Commentary on Genesis", in *Innovation and Tradition in the Writings of the Venerable Bede*, ed. Scott DeGregorio (Morgantown: West Virginia University Press, 2006), 101-19. He also outlines the ways in which the same allegories may be interpreted differently by different commentators.

Over the course of this thesis, ‘allegory’ is applied as an accommodating term indicating how one idea or entity might be meant as a ‘sign’, a ‘figure’, a ‘symbol’, or an ‘image’ of another. These terms themselves are indicative of allegorical language and are applied as such over the course of the thesis. For the most part, the thesis uses the term ‘allegory’ to recognize those allegories used by Bede in his exegetical commentaries, and applied (or not) within his own narrative constructions. The application of entities with symbolic meaning can underscore narrative significance, and it is this rather than the interpretation of the events of Anglo-Saxon history that this thesis pursues in its study of allegory’s role in early medieval hagiographies. In particular, alienation or *peregrinatio* is discussed in 1.3 in its metaphorical and allegorical context, and the figurative meaning of the sea and its significance is discussed in 2.1.

### 0.3.2c. Writing Travel

The present thesis writes about travel as it was conceptualized within the intellectual and theological frameworks of early medieval authors. Principally focussing on Bede and the milieu that surrounded him, this thesis engages with language, theology, and narratives of travel. It considers the ways that theological themes relating to travel were expressed and how early medieval narrators applied these themes. It explores the meaning and theology of the terms *stabilitas* and *peregrinatio* and sets travel concepts in their narrative context. This exploration of mobility understands travel to be fundamental to social reality, but that functional reality remains distant from the expression of mobility within narratives.

Narrative discourse should be at the heart of scholarly conceptualizations of mobility in the early medieval period.<sup>179</sup> Previous research into mobility in early medieval Britain has drawn upon the limited evidence from narrative and chronicle sources, archaeological and sculptural evidence, and place-names, to build broad, functionalist illustrations of movement through land- and seascapes across the period.<sup>180</sup> This thesis deviates from this search for the objective reality of past travel, to consider the role of narrative and theology in scholarly understanding of early medieval mobility, and simultaneously the place of mobility within early medieval narratives. In this, the role of the narrators and their conceptualization of travel is crucial. The role of mobility in early medieval Northumbria as a social phenomenon that underlies action and societal norms is important in establishing its role in narratives. In society, individuals, all of whom confer their meaning to events, enacted mobility, recorded mobility, and historicized mobility. It is the aim of this thesis to understand the narrative context of mobility, including travel's absence from narratives, and to ask what it means for our understanding of movement in early medieval Northumbria.

This thesis places as much emphasis on absences from text as it does from narrative inclusions. Thus, it tries to consider those ways of conceptualizing travel that one might expect to encounter as well as those noticeable gaps and differences between

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<sup>179</sup> Although considering the nature of narrative discourse by authors writing in the nineteenth century, much of Hayden White's theorising can be applicable to the authors of the early medieval period. His perspective is primarily on those writing meta-narratives of the past, and their literary form. Thus when making White's conceptualization of narrative applicable to early medieval history, it is a perspective from which to critique the authors of the early medieval period who wrote meta-narratives. Hayden White theorized the nature of history as narrative discourse: the inevitable combination of the known, or fact, with the unknown, or imagined. He saw the process of writing historical works as an attempt to negotiate between the unprocessed historical record, other accounts, and an audience. See, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975).

<sup>180</sup> As was discussed in 0.2.

different texts and authors' use of notions and instruments of mobility. The most directly meaningful absences are those that can be identified through comparisons, the places where one author's enthusiasm on a topic highlights another text's reticence, or where within the same text two forms of transport are treated with opposing levels of engagement. Stephen's VW might best exemplify this; Stephen treated sea travel with enthusiasm and interest, but travel on land barely merits a mention.<sup>181</sup> Further, the relatively expansive treatment of the sea in Stephen's work is a counter against which to compare Bede's usage of the sea.<sup>182</sup> Conversely, Bede's descriptions of walking bishops comment on the absence of overland movement in Stephen's presentation of Wilfrid's many travels.<sup>183</sup>

This thesis frames some of its investigation into the conceptualization of travel by countering assumed ways of spiritualizing movement. The contested assumptions of fixity and pilgrimage guide the theological considerations of Part 1. Part 2 begins with the question of how much allegory informed or was absent from the rhetorical use of travel in hagiographical narratives. However, significance can only be attributed to absent details or concepts when they can be shown to have been used in similar conditions, and thus that they had currency and relevance.

The crux of this thesis's approach to texts sits in the interplay between the language used in a text, the structures that govern the use of that language, and the social reality in which they originate. Gabrielle Spiegel developed her theory of the social logic of texts, combining an insistence on seeing language as socially generated with an equal

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<sup>181</sup> For the meaning of sea travel, see 2.1.

<sup>182</sup> 2.3.1a directly compares these two authors in Wilfrid's sea crossings.

<sup>183</sup> For an engagement with the meaning of land travel in the context of walking and the absence of movement over land in VW, see 2.2.2.



insistence on understanding the discursive character of texts as literary artefacts. Spiegel proposed that her concept is a 'middle ground' theory, a mixed reading, through which she sought to reintroduce context to text.<sup>184</sup> She suggested that one should imbue text with contexts that come from the socially generated nature of language. This flexible appreciation of text and context expands how the paradigm of historical research becomes one of interpretation and discourse, communication between cultural participants.<sup>185</sup> Histories, their language use and their textuality, incorporate social and linguistic structures; they are intimately related to the environment from which they emerge.<sup>186</sup> Thus, both language and society inherently governed the textuality of mobility. The social use and the social meaning of travel and mobility, mediated by language and linguistic structures, are contained within narrative and text. Thus, this textual analysis provides a social context for the interpretation of mobility within narratives.

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<sup>184</sup> See Gabrielle M. Spiegel, *The Past as Text: The Theory and Practice of Medieval Historiography* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997); particularly "History, Historicism, and the Social Logic of the Text", 3-28; and "Towards a Theory of the Middle Ground", 44-56; Spiegel reasserted her position in "The Task of the Historian", *American Historical Review* 114, no. 1 (2009): 1-15.

<sup>185</sup> See also Michael Roberts, "Postmodernism and the Linguistic Turn", in *Making History*, ed. Peter Lambert and Phillipp R. Schofield (London: Routledge, 2004), 227-40, at 228.

<sup>186</sup> After Spiegel, "Social Logic", 3-28, 44-56.

PART 1:

IDEAS AND THEOLOGIES



## 1.1. Stability

*Stabilitas* (stability) is one of the three central monastic vows according to *Regula Benedicti* (RB).<sup>187</sup> It has been assumed that both RB and its ideas of *stabilitas* were influential in eighth-century Anglo-Saxon monasticism. The idea that the vow of *stabilitas* tied monastic individuals to a single place, that is, *stabilitas loci*, is not evident in the Anglo-Saxon period. However, later literature and ideas are influential, and the assumption that, within ‘Benedictine’ monasticism, *stabilitas* referred to locative fixity is pervasive in the secondary literature.<sup>188</sup> This proposition has been so accepted that attempts have been made to explain what Michael Gleason calls ‘the discrepancy between the ideal Rule of Saint Benedict and [Biscop and Ceolfrith’s]

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<sup>187</sup> Benedict, *Regula Benedicti* = *The Rule of St Benedict*, ed. and trans. Timothy Fry, *The Rule of St. Benedict* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1981). RB was produced at Monte Cassino, Italy, in the mid-sixth century by Benedict of Nursia. It is one Rule in a tradition of monastic guidelines. It is traditionally argued that a lot of its text and sentiment are borrowed from *Regula Magistri*. *Regula Magistri* = *The Rule of the Master*, ed. and trans. Adalbert De Vogüé, *La Règle du Maître*, 3 vols. (Paris: 1964-1965); trans. Luke Eberle, *The Rule of the Master: Regula Magistri* (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1977). However, Marilyn Dunn sees RB as the earlier text, and RM as a composite text demonstrating a mixed rule based on RB. For the debate, see Marilyn Dunn, “Mastering Benedict: Monastic Rules and Their Authors in the Early Medieval West”, *The English Historical Review* 105, no. 416 (1990): 567-94; Adalbert de Vogüé, “The Master and St Benedict: A Reply to Marilyn Dunn”, *The English Historical Review* 107, no. 422 (1992): 95-103; Marilyn Dunn, “The Master and St Benedict: A Rejoinder”, *The English Historical Review* 107, no. 422 (1992): 104-11.

<sup>188</sup> It will be shown that this is not the case. The value of *stabilitas loci* in the context of examining movement is assumed by, for example, Palmer, *Frankish World*, 60; Dietz, *Wandering Monks*, 206-8. In both these examples discussion focusses on monastic travel despite the acknowledgement of the influence of supposed Benedictine ideals of stability. In Dietz’s work, whilst Benedictine *stabilitas loci* is assumed to have been influential there is a parallel line of argument that Britain and Ireland, on the fringes of the western Christian world, were home to a wide variety of monastic practices including itinerant spirituality. Nicholas Howe also comments on ‘Bede’s devotion to the Benedictine idea of *stabilitas loci*’, noting that Bede’s autobiographical statement at the conclusion of HE (v.24) is customarily taken as evidence of his devotion to *stabilitas*, and that this is how Bede intended it to be read, see *Writing the Map of Anglo-Saxon England: Essays in Cultural Geography* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 130-1. Bede wrote ‘I have spent all my life in this monastery, applying myself entirely to the study of the Scriptures’, *uitae in eiusdem monasterii habitatione peragens, omnem meditandis scripturis operam dedi*. This, Howe writes, is proof that Bede honoured the ideal of *stabilitas loci* by ‘focussing on the essential matter of place’. The fact that he worked in a single monastery through his life rather than in multiple communities during his career is remarkable because it sets Bede apart from his high-profile contemporaries. This has nothing to do with *stabilitas*, even if there were a concept of *stabilitas loci* in this period.

relations to it'.<sup>189</sup> *Stabilitas*, as discussed in RB itself, was based on the virtue of endurance or perseverance, and rootedness in Christian practice, not so much any given place.<sup>190</sup> There are two issues. First, the relationship between Benedictine ideals, including *stabilitas*, and seventh- and eighth-century monasticism ought to be considered on a case-by-case basis. Secondly, *stabilitas loci* ought to be understood as a facet of later Benedictine monasticism not an inherent reading of RB. This chapter will outline the distinction between Bede's use of *stabilitas* and that of RB. It will also disconnect sixth- through eighth-century ideas of *stabilitas* from a later phenomenon of *stabilitas loci*.

The assumption that Bede and his contemporaries subscribed to ideas of *stabilitas loci* seems to be a remnant of earlier scholarship that viewed the Anglo-Saxon Church through the prism of 'English Benedictine monasticism'. This view of Bede and his contemporaries as Benedictines was common until the mid-twentieth century.<sup>191</sup> Patrick Wormald redressed the balance, considering seventh-century monasticism as situated in a period of dynamic change:

No seventh-century monastery could be described as 'Benedictine' in quite the modern sense. In the seventh century, we are still in what is nowadays known as the age of the *regula mixta*. This is not so much because the world had yet to awaken to the exclusive merits of St Benedict as because

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<sup>189</sup> Gleason argues that Bede wrote HA in justification and forgiveness of 'Biscop's ceaseless travel' which was problematic because 'the expenditures of time, money and effort in organizing half a dozen trips to Rome were enormous' and RB does not provide for such things, in "Bede and His Fathers", *Classica et Mediaevalia* 45 (1994): 223-38.

<sup>190</sup> RB 1.11; 4.78; 58.4, 9, 17; 60.9; and 61.5. For a commentary, see Terrence Kardong, *Benedict's Rule: A Translation and Commentary* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1996), 473, 501.

<sup>191</sup> See for example Cuthbert Butler, who presented Bede as the 'first Benedictine student and scholar', in *Benedictine Monachism: Studies in Benedictine Life and Rule* (London: Longmans, Green and Co, 1919), 336-7. Robert Hanning illustrates this attitude; he stated 'in Bede's *Historia*, and in the work of the English Benedictines of his era, the social involvement of the early medieval monastic *ecclesia* reaches a great peak', in *The Vision of History in Early Britain: From Gildas to Geoffrey of Monmouth* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1966), 65.

of a rather different attitude towards the codification of the monastic life.<sup>192</sup>

Wormald sought to consider the elements that contributed to the mixed rule under which Bede lived. In doing so, he identified elements of Benedictine rule expressed in Bede's work. Subsequent scholars, too, have reflected on further Benedictine influences on Bede, his outlook, and his theology. For instance, Henry Mayr-Harting drew connections between Bede's ideas of monastic social structures and social background, and that expressed in RB.<sup>193</sup> Further studies have sought to outline interactions between Bede's writings and theology and the Rule or Benedictine ideas.<sup>194</sup>

### 1.1.1. Benedictine *Stabilitas*

The traditional view of the monk's vow of *stabilitas* presumes communal stability through geographic stability.<sup>195</sup> Jean Leclercq considered the Latin tradition of stability up to Gregory the Great (d. 604). He argued that in the Christian tradition 'rather than being primarily a practical and legalistic category, stability is a virtue by means of which we participate in the patience, obedience and perseverance of Christ'.<sup>196</sup> He outlined the difference between the biblical vocabulary of stability, and that of the Roman philosophers. In the Bible, stability is more than mental tranquillity; it is 'the achievement of man's remaining within himself'.<sup>197</sup> Humanity is offered stability in God's presence and, through it, may join with God in His being and His

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<sup>192</sup> Wormald, "Bede and Benedict Biscop", 142.

<sup>193</sup> Henry Mayr-Harting, *The Venerable Bede, the Rule of St. Benedict and Social Class*, Jarrow Lecture (Jarrow: St Paul's Church, 1976).

<sup>194</sup> For example, see A. G. P. van der Walt, "Reflections of the Benedictine Rule in Bede's Homiliary", *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 37, no. 03 (1986): 367-76; Scott DeGregorio, "Bede and Benedict of Nursia", in *Early Medieval Studies in Memory of Patrick Wormald*, ed. Stephen David Baxter (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), 149-63.

<sup>195</sup> See for example, Butler, *Benedictine Monachism*, 125-6. Butler noted the importance of stability in the community and argued that it was 'local stability', residing in the monastery.

<sup>196</sup> Jean Leclercq, "In Praise of Stability", *Monastic Studies* 13 (1982): 89-98, at 98.

<sup>197</sup> *Ibid.*, 93-4.

peace. Leclercq outlined a patristic understanding of stability that built on New Testament ideas of the stable true faith. Augustine reflected on God's unchangeable nature compared to His work changing human nature, that is, bringing it from its sinful condition to His most firm stability.<sup>198</sup> Early monastic literature, in which *stabilitas* referred to the stability of heaven and firmness of the soul, engaged similar ideas.<sup>199</sup> Leclercq portrayed the sixth-century context of RB's production, noting that both Cassiodorus and Gregory the Great viewed stability as a virtue and a condition of divinity and the eternal.<sup>200</sup> Thus, he noted, Benedict's *stabilitas* was not primarily locative. Leclercq concluded that Benedict's concept of *stabilitas* remains ambiguous, but it is a virtue through which the monk participates with Christ in his perseverance, patience, and obedience.<sup>201</sup> Building upon Leclercq, Jordan Wales reflected upon Gregory the Great's theology of *stabilitas*. He argued that locative fixity was not a facet of Gregory's understanding of stability. Instead, Gregory understood stability as a set of spiritual relationships by which the soul conforms to God.<sup>202</sup> Actions dedicated to and with knowledge of God create an outward likeness of God, this, in turn, inspires an inward conformity to God.

In RB, the term *stabilitas* occurs five times, and *stabilis* once. The expression *stabilitas loci* is not used. *Stabilitas* is primarily referenced in the context of accepting new members into a community. The only occasion where this is not the case is RB 4.78, in which Benedict outlined the 'tools of good work'. He stated, 'the workshop where

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<sup>198</sup> Ibid., 95. Leclercq notes Augustine devoted a whole chapter to God's stability and its impact on humanity in *De Civitate Dei* 11.21, and the theme recurs across other writing.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid., 96-7.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid., 97-8.

<sup>201</sup> Ibid., 98.

<sup>202</sup> Jordan Joseph Wales, "The Narrated Theology of 'Stabilitas' in Gregory the Great's Life of Benedict", *Cistercian Studies Quarterly* 49, no. 2 (2014): 163-98, at 166-8.

we should work hard at all these things is the *claustra monasterii* and *stabilitas* in the community'.<sup>203</sup> *Stabilitas in congregatione* is explicitly rootedness in a given community, not a given place. It is worth noting that the 'workshop' analogy is predicated on both the boundedness of the monastery and *stabilitas* in the community. The two are interconnected facets rather than the same ideal. In the corresponding passage in *Regula Magistri* (RM), the author, known as 'the Master', wrote that 'the workshop is the monastery, where the instruments of the heart are kept in the enclosure of the body, and the work of the divine art can be accomplished with assiduous care and perseverance'.<sup>204</sup> Terrence Kardong highlights that the relationship between workshop and monastery in RB is more natural than in RM, whilst noting that Benedict's workshop as stability makes less sense than the Master's accomplishment through perseverance.<sup>205</sup> Kardong associates RB's stability with the Master's concept of 'perseverance'.<sup>206</sup>

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<sup>203</sup> RB 4:78: *officina vero ubi haec omnia diligenter operemur claustra sunt monasterii et stabilitas in congregatione*.

<sup>204</sup> RM 6: *officina uero monasterium est, in qua ferramenta cordis in corporis clusura reposita opus diuinae artis diligenti custodia perseuerando operari potest*. The primacy of RM has been questioned by Dunn, "Mastering Benedict". If RM is the earlier of the two, then it is the Rule that Benedict adapted, and therefore aspects of parity will have similar meanings and intentions. If it is a mixed rule based on RB, as Dunn argued, then in cases of parity, where the Master has elaborated, it can be understood to be a contemporary clarification or correction of the Benedictine position. In this case, whilst not reflective of Benedict's own intentions, the meaning expressed by the Master may be used as an aid to understand an interpretation of Benedict by a close contemporary.

<sup>205</sup> Kardong, *Benedict's Rule*, 96.

<sup>206</sup> Kardong comments that through that connection, 'no doubt monastic stability was ultimately based on the [New Testament] virtue of *hypomone*, patient endurance', see *Benedict's Rule*, 470. It ought to be noted that there is only one occurrence of *stabilitas* in the Vulgate. Although there is semantic overlap, there is not a direct equivalency between Vulgate *hypomoné* (ὑπομονή) and *stabilitas*. *Hypomoné* is primarily translated as *patientia* (Luke 8:15, 21:19; Romans 2:7, 5:3 and 4, 8:25, 15:4 and 5; 2 Corinthians 6:4, 12:12; Colossians 1:11; 2 Thessalonians 3:5; 1 Timothy 6:11; 2 Timothy 3:10; Titus 2:2; Hebrews 10:36, 12:1; James 1:3 and 4; 2 Peter 1:6; Revelation 1:9, 2:2, 3, and 19, 3:10, and 13:10), but also *tolerans* (2 Corinthians 1:6), *sustinentia* (1 Thessalonians 1:3; 2 Thessalonians 1:4) and *sustineo* (James 5:11). After Strong's Concordance for Greek root word ὑπομονή, G5281, James Strong, *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1894). From the alternative position, Jean Leclercq has considered the concordance between *stabilis* in Vulgate and Greek and Hebrew correspondents, noting that there is no standard relation. The sense of the various Greek and Hebrew words, as well as the use of the Latin word, conforms to the original meaning of *stabilis* – solidity, firmness, and perseverance. Leclercq, "Stability", 92-4.



The Master infrequently used *stabilitas*; it appears six times across the length of RM. The first occurrence is in RM 64.2, which concerns how many times a brother ought to be accepted back after he leaves the monastery. The Master noted that ‘his fidelity to the divine service in the Lord’s sight is recognizable to the degree that the *stabilitas* of his feet is discernible in men’s sight’.<sup>207</sup> In this instance, the *stabilitas* of the brother’s physical fixity (or lack of it) is taken to be indicative of the *stabilitas* of his spiritual resolve, that is, remaining in the monastery symbolizes remaining faithful to God. This is an isolated usage of the term; elsewhere it refers to a pledge made in the context of new brethren entering the monastery.

The Master used *stabilitas* in three consecutive chapters, which together deal with the process of admitting new brethren to the monastery. In these chapters, the Master used the term in a fixed manner. First, RM 87, which concerns how to deal with the possessions of those seeking to enter a monastery, required a pledge of *stabilitas* when a brother chose to give his possessions to the monastery along with himself, rather than sell them. The Master said of him, ‘let him first with his own hand draw up a pledge of *stabilitas*, adding an inventory of his goods’.<sup>208</sup> With this pledge, he ought to declare that, should he leave the monastery, he would depart without taking his goods from God. This pledge is a means of dealing with the issues of belongings and the connection that possessions maintain with the secular world. It enhances the strength of the disciple’s commitment to the monastic life and his separation from the world. Beyond this, in RM 88 and 89, *stabilitas* denotes the life that the disciple seeks within

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<sup>207</sup> RM 64.2: *talis apud Dominum eius agnoscitur diuini seruitii fides, qualis apud homines pedum stabilitas constitit.*

<sup>208</sup> RM 87.35: *cauens manu sua prius de stabilitate, simul rerum suarum breue adiuncto, [...] per donationem offerat totum.*

monasticism. The pledge of *stabilitas*, therefore, is a declaration of personal intent upon seeking a specific monastic lifestyle.

RM 88 discusses the time required by novices so that they can properly consider committing themselves to *stabilitas*.<sup>209</sup> After he has disposed of his possessions or given them to the monastery, the disciple is required to live and work for a two-month period as a member of the monastery, although residing in the guesthouse. He is free to leave at the end of this time. RM 89 concerns the final stage of admission. The Master opened by noting that if disciples ‘choose *stabilitas* after completing the two months delay for deliberation, and would like to commit themselves to perseverance’ they ought to go through the process outlined.<sup>210</sup> Toward the end of the chapter, the subject returns to possessions. The Master noted that inventories of donations should be maintained and included in the abbot’s will so that no brother ‘chancing to quit the monastery will have the effrontery to demand the return of his possessions, cutting short his *stabilitas* in the monastery and breaking his word to the deceased’.<sup>211</sup> In both of these chapters, *stabilitas* appears to be used as a technical term for expressing the undertaking of a specific monastic lifestyle, the process of becoming and being a monk.

In RM 89, the disciple chooses *stabilitas* but commits to *perseuerantia*. However, in RB, a vow of *stabilitas* is named explicitly for the admittance of novices, priests wishing to live in the monastery, and monks who request to join the community. In

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<sup>209</sup> RM 88 is titled ‘Delaying the Admission of Brothers so that they may Deliberate about Committing themselves to *Stabilitas*’. *De induitiis fratrum suscipiendorum, in quibus de stabilitate firmanda secum tractare debeant*. RM 88.1: ‘when there has been presented to the new brother by the Rule through the abbot all the foregoing about committing himself to stability’, *cum de omnibus supradictis conuentus nouus frater a regula per abbatem de stabilitate firmanda*.

<sup>210</sup> RM 89.1: *cum expletae duorum mensuum ad tractandum indutiae fuerint [...] ab eis magis stabilitas eligatur et perseuerantia [...] ab eis placeat adimpleri*.

<sup>211</sup> RM 89.33-4: *eius forte de monasterio exiens repetendi rerum suarum fiduciam habeat et stabilitatem monasterio et fidem frangat defuncto*.

each instance, Benedict gave *stabilitas* a personal pronoun, thus the individuals must promise ‘their *stabilitas*’.<sup>212</sup> Kardong notes that this does not translate well into English.<sup>213</sup> However, if one considers *stabilitas* to be a virtue, as Leclercq did, and as Kardong surely implies by equating *stabilitas* with ‘perseverance’ rather than geographical fixity, the possessive pronouns becomes reasonable. For example, in the instance of accepting novices, RB instructs that ‘if he promises perseverance in his *stabilitas*, then after two months have elapsed let this rule be read straight through to him’.<sup>214</sup> In this instance, even if it could be explained grammatically, the idea of persevering to remain in a single geographical place seems unlikely unless one is to imagine novices wandering off within their first two months with a community, but still wanting to take vows. It seems more likely that the personal characteristics of steadfastness, semantically connected to traits of endurance and suffering, are being invoked. Later in Chapter 58, it is again noted that ‘when he is to be received, he comes before the whole community in the oratory and promises his *stabilitas*, fidelity to monastic life and obedience’.<sup>215</sup> Similarly, priests who wish to live in the monastery should only be accepted ‘if they, too, promise to keep the rule and observe their *stabilitas*’.<sup>216</sup> Upon receiving a visiting monk ‘if after a while he wishes to remain and bind himself to his *stabilitas*, he should not be refused this wish’.<sup>217</sup> In all cases, a possessive pronoun is used, and the invocation is best explained as an attribute, one

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<sup>212</sup> RB 58.9: *stabilitate sua perseverantia*; 58.17: *stabilitate sua*; 60.9: *propria stabilitate*; 61.5: *stabilitatem suam*.

<sup>213</sup> Kardong, *Benedict's Rule*, 497.

<sup>214</sup> RB 58.9: *si promiserit de stabilitate sua perseverantia, post duorum mensuum circulum legatur ei haec regula per ordinem*.

<sup>215</sup> RB 58.17: *susciendus autem in oratorio coram omnibus promittat de stabilitate sua et conversatione morum suorum et obedientia*.

<sup>216</sup> RB 60.9: *si promittunt de observatione regulae vel propria stabilitate*.

<sup>217</sup> RB 61.5: *si vero postea voluerit stabilitatem suam firmare, non renuatur talis voluntas*.

that goes along with the other attributes of faithfulness and obedience, rather than a vow of geographical fixity.

The single use of *stabilis* in RB deviates from this pattern. Being stable, rather than ‘stability’, has connotations of remaining static as a counter to excessive movement. This is the description of *gyrovagi*, who are ‘always on the move, they are never *stabilis*’.<sup>218</sup> This has the potential to be about physical movement. However, a dual reading of the negativity of their lack of fixed place combined with the character flaw of instability condemns them more than a singular reading of *gyrovagi* as either without place or without steadfastness of faith and character. The reading of this phrase, perhaps, ought to be that the *gyrovagi* are always wandering, always unpredictable, and never constant in place or character. RB’s brief criticism of the *gyrovagi* is a condemnation of their perpetual mobility, but it also criticises their lack of rootedness and community. To be based in a monastery would have provided routine and separation from the unpredictable outside world, but it also provided community and identity. In their perpetual mobility, *gyrovagi* are unknowable; they do not travel with reference to their abbots or bishops, and they interrupt the social order that is so important to RB. RM commented on *gyrovagi* in much more detail; the Master condemned their excessive eating and drinking at great length.<sup>219</sup> In this version, the Master explicitly rebuked the burden that they place on ordered monasticism and explained the threat of excessive movement to coenobitic monasticism.

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<sup>218</sup> RB 1.11: *semper vagi et numquam stabiles*.

<sup>219</sup> RM 1.13-74. They fake humility and the Master characterized their reasons for travelling as lies. The idea of the *gyrovagus* infuses through the rest of RM, where his impious activities sometimes come up against conceptual problems in genuine visitors, or monks on the road. For a discussion of *gyrovagi*, see Dietz, *Wandering Monks*, 88-105.

Benedict's concept of *stabilitas* remains ambiguous. As Jean Leclercq identified, *stabilitas* is a virtue through which the monk might come together with Christ. It is a personal characteristic, of firmness, of solidity, of constancy, to which an individual can commit. Benedict's *stabilitas* may express a particular monastic lifestyle in a manner that matches the Master's use of the term in RM 87-89. It is entirely unambiguous that neither the expression nor the concept *stabilitas loci* is found in RB. Geographical fixity is not prescribed by the text of RB.

### 1.1.2. Anglo-Saxon *Stabilitas*

In Bede's commentaries, *stabilitas* is not an earthly condition. Like RB, Bede did not relate *stabilitas* to place and he expressed a correlation between *stabilitas* and community. In his exegesis, Bede discussed stability in relation to the individual faithful and to the eternal Church. People could be stable in their possession and expression of Christian virtues. The eternal kingdom is stable in contrast to the tumult of this life.

*Stabilitas* as a personal characteristic is not apparent to the same extent in Bede's work as it was in RB. However, following Primasius on the Apocalypse, Bede wrote of those who 'are built upon a rock who, while others collapse in the earthquake, glorify the Lord in their *stabilitas* with an upright confession'.<sup>220</sup> Further, he presented *stabilitas* as a characteristic of the saints and of the servants of Christ.<sup>221</sup> Bede also used *stabilitas* to describe the mind, actions or faith of an individual or the collective

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<sup>220</sup> *ExpApoc* Book 2, 17 [11:13], 379: *sunt super petram aedificati, qui aliis terrae motu ruentibus de stabilitate sua recta deum confessione clarificant.*

<sup>221</sup> *ExpApoc* Book 3, 27 [16:3], 222: 'who also assail the *stabilitas* of the servants of Christ by waves of bitter persecution', *servorum Christi stabilitatem undis amarae persecutionis insectantur*; [16:8], 224: 'the devil's body is tormented without remedy by the *stabilitas* of the saints', *diaboli corpus de stabilitate sanctorum inremediabiliter cruciatur.*

Church.<sup>222</sup> *Stabilitas* of spirit is an asset placed alongside humility. Bede described individuals worthy of imitation as precious stones, ‘those whom we know to cling in a special way by the virtue of humility to the Lord, people whom we see persevering unflinchingly with invincible *stabilitas* of spirit like squared stones’.<sup>223</sup> In a range of textual contexts, Bede’s *stabilitas* is characteristic of the mind. However, there is no evidence that Bede understood *stabilitas* of the mind in a manner that matched Gregory the Great’s lofty ideas of *stabilitas* as the means by which the soul conformed to the life of God.<sup>224</sup>

Virtues themselves could be stable. In *InEz*, Bede discussed the stable virtues of the elect. Ezra 3 deals with the construction of the second Temple, specifically the restoration of the altars and the structure of the Temple. In this context, Bede discussed the figurative meaning of squaring stone, which masons or *latomi* did when they were building. In a spiritual sense, he noted, those who teach and educate are formed into a square so that they stand firm to receive God’s grace.<sup>225</sup> In this allegory, good works and virtues unite the elect, just as the squared stones are cemented in their place.<sup>226</sup>

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<sup>222</sup> See for example, *InGen* Book 2 [8:4], 192: ‘the Church, as if ‘squared up’ by the *stabilitas* of its mind and actions, not only awaits rest in this life but also acquires eternal rest in the next’, *quia ecclesia, suae mentis atque actionis stabilitate quasi conquadrata, requiem et in hac uita expectat et in futura percipit aeternam*; *Hom.* i.20 notes that at the gates of hell, the weak are cajoled away from the ‘*stabilitas* of their faith’ *stabilitate fidei*; *Hom.* ii.21 comments that Peter was given his name “‘Peter” on account of the strength and *stabilitas* of his unassailable faith’, *pro fortitudine ac stabilitate fidei inexpugnabilis uocabulum petri meruit*.

<sup>223</sup> *DTemp* Book1, 4.4 [5:18], 16: *imitandos proponere quos per uirtutem humilitatis specialiter domino adhaerere nouerimus quos inuincibili mentis stabilitate quasi quadratos quodammodo*.

<sup>224</sup> As explored by Wales, “Narrated Theology”, particularly 166-8.

<sup>225</sup> *InEz* Book 1 [3:7], 56-57: ‘for no matter which way you turn it, a square will be stable’, *quocumque enim uerteris quadratum stabit*. He provided another context for making logs and stones square: in Genesis 6:14, Noah squared logs for the ark, which is figurative of the Church.

<sup>226</sup> *InEz* Book 1 [3:7], 57. Similarly, the allegory of the elect as like a square: stable, solid and immovable in their faith, recurs in *DTemp* Book 1, 4.1-4 [5:17-8], 14-6; and Book 2, 19.9 [7:26], 90. Bede also employed this allegory in *Hom.* ii.25: ‘just as what is squared will stand upright no matter how it is turned, so the life of those who are perfect, which has been carefully directed toward the straight line of truth, cannot be overturned from its *stabilitas* by any pressure from temptations’. *Sicut enim quadratum quacumque uertitur stabit ita nimirum uita perfectorum quae ad ueritatis lineam sollicita directa est nullis temptationum impulsibus a sua nouit stabilitate deici*.

The elect are not locationally fixed. Their cement is the virtues that bind, taught by Paul in Colossians 3:12-14: compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, patience, forgiveness, and love. Bede celebrated the coming together of the faithful, but expressed nothing that suggests that once the faithful gather they should not disperse. Constancy and stability are found in the love of God, and virtuous behaviour. Bede particularly emphasized the virtue of humility. He said that the boards of the Tabernacle were humility in the minds of the righteous, which join in fraternal charity.<sup>227</sup> The devotion of the faithful to one another binds them together. Once the boards of the Tabernacle were brought together, they became one in the structure. This represents the *stabilitas* of the collective faithful.<sup>228</sup>

Reiterating the patristic tradition, which saw heaven and the eternal as *stabilitas* and the calm after the storm, Bede wrote about the *stabilitas* of the eternal Church and the Age to come.<sup>229</sup> In Revelation 21, John sees and describes the new heaven and earth, the new Jerusalem, and the new Temple. Its length and breadth are the virtues of faith, charity, and hope. Bede noted that ‘the perfect *stabilitas* of the Church would not exist if one of these were missing’.<sup>230</sup> The virtues of faith are instrumental in maintaining the stability of the eternal Church. This is further emphasized in his commentary on the next verse, Revelation 21:17, which describes the size of the walls. Bede noted the numerological significance of the size, stating that it signified the ‘*stabilis* perfection

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<sup>227</sup> *DTab* Book 2, 5 [26:17], 69: ‘the virtue of humility which is in the minds of the righteous, through which they are closely joined together in fraternal charity’. *Uirtutem designant humilitatis in mentibus iustorum per quam maxime sibi inuicem fraterna caritate iunguntur.*

<sup>228</sup> *DTab* Book 2, 5 [26:17], 69: ‘the firm stability of the unwavering wall itself shows with what great strength it is joined together through the boards’. *Quanta tamen uirtute per tabulas sibimet coadunauerit ipsa parietis inconcussi firma stabilitas ostendit.*

<sup>229</sup> Leclercq briefly outlined Augustine’s position, along with those who followed him, see “Stability”, 95-6.

<sup>230</sup> *ExpApoc* Book 3, 37 [21:16], 266: *quarum si una minus habuerit, perfecta ecclesiae stabilitas non erit.*

of the holy city itself'.<sup>231</sup> The individual and collective faithful can create *stabilitas* in this life through virtue, but God, who dictated the form of the eternal city and made it perfect and *stabilis*, makes lasting *stabilitas*. The triumphant Church stands firm in opposition to perpetual motion. Following Primasius, Bede stated that 'the city of this world is compared to an *instabilis* millstone. For the wicked walk about in a circle'.<sup>232</sup> During the apocalypse, Babylon is to be thrown down as the millstone and drowned in the sea, and its inhabitants will be absent from the heavenly Jerusalem. This millstone is distinct from the stone that is a metaphor for the Church, which is '*stabilis* and firm, and which defies the onslaught of storms'.<sup>233</sup> Bede brought these contrasting stones, *stabilis* and *instabilis*, together in his commentary to highlight the contrasting fates of the earth and the Church.

The *stabilitas* of the eternal church stands in contrast to the violent seas of this life. Bede used this imagery in *ExpApoc* when discussing John's witness of the destruction of the world. John saw the nations and Babylon fall; at that time, he noted that the islands and mountains were absent, hidden from the waves of this world.<sup>234</sup> Bede commented that, at this time, 'the Church, which because of the eminence of its *stabilitas* is compared with islands and mountains, prudently hides from the waves of her persecutors'.<sup>235</sup> This is a long-running use of imagery: the destructiveness, or fleeting nature of the waves, is contrasted with the *stabilitas* of the triumphant

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<sup>231</sup> *ExpApoc* Book 3, 37 [21:17], 266: *stabilem ciuitatis sanctae perfectio*.

<sup>232</sup> *ExpApoc* Book 3, 33 [18:21], 241: *ciuitas saeculi pro peccatorum pondere errore instabili molae comparatur. In circuitu enim impii ambulant*.

<sup>233</sup> *ExpApoc* Book 3, 33 [18:21], 242: *stabili et firmo, quae tempestatum spernat incursus*.

<sup>234</sup> Revelation 16:20.

<sup>235</sup> *ExpApoc* Book 3, 19 [16:20], 229: *ecclesia, quae propter stabilitatis eminentiam inulis comparatur ac montibus, a persecutorum se cauta fluctibus abscondit*.



church.<sup>236</sup> Bede called on the same imagery in the concluding sentences of DTR: ‘and so our little book concerning the fleeting and wave-tossed course of time comes to a fitting end in *aeterna stabilitas* and *stabilis aeternitas*’.<sup>237</sup> Here he reflected on the appropriateness of the book ending in the eighth age, which is stable eternity, having travelled through *fluctivagus* ages.

Within an exegetical context, Bede reflected upon *stabilitas* as a characteristic that might shape virtues themselves. Various, he assigned *stabilitas* to the saints and the elect, and to the eternal homeland. There is no conflict between this use of *stabilitas* and that presented in RB. It is likely that Bede’s understanding of *stabilitas* within a monastic context also engaged with *stabilitas* as a personal characteristic. Bede only used *stabilitas* on one occasion within his hagiographical and historical writing; this is in VCP. He did not utilize it in HE or HA. However, the text of a letter Pope Honorius sent to Honorius, archbishop of Canterbury, copied by Bede, also made use of the language of steadfastness of character.<sup>238</sup> This is the only example of the language of stability or steadfastness employed in HE. In this instance, *stabilitas* invoked steadfastness of character and belief in the labours of preaching, and in following the rules of Gregory. This papal usage of the term, like Bede’s broader exegetical use of *stabilitas* as a characteristic, is reflected in the brief Anglo-Saxon hagiographical usage.

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<sup>236</sup> This is the allegory of the sea, which will be discussed in relation to the presentation of waterborne transport in Chapter 2.1.

<sup>237</sup> DTR 71, 249: *ergo noster libellus de uolubili ac fluctuago temporum lapsu descriptus oportunitate de aeterna stabilitate ac stabili aeternitate habeat finem.*

<sup>238</sup> HE ii.18: ‘we continually offer thanks to God’s majesty; and we humbly beseech Him perpetually to establish *stabilitas* in you, beloved brother, as you labour in preaching the gospel’, *maiestati eius gratias indesinenter exsoluimus, eumque uotis supplicibus exoramus, ut uestram dilectionem in praedicatione euangelii elaborantem [...] perpeti stabilitate confirmet.*

Bede's sole hagiographical use of this term appears in Cuthbert's early call to *stabilitas*, which follows the vocabulary choice of VCA. Bede explained that, while playing with other children, 'suddenly one of the little ones, apparently hardly three years old, runs up to [Cuthbert] and begins to exhort him with the gravity of an old man not to indulge in idle games but rather by *stabilitas* to control both mind and limbs'.<sup>239</sup> The anonymous author noted that the words of the boy were "'be *stabilis* and leave this foolish play'".<sup>240</sup> These phrases echo the monastic *stabilitas* of character and lifestyle. Cuthbert's adherence to the boy's demand demonstrates his inherent Christian and monastic character, although it may be being invoked as a Christian quality without reference to any *regula*.<sup>241</sup> Alternatively, rather than referring to a specifically monastic quality, scriptural convention may have influenced this terminological use. VCA contains a second use of *stabilis*, an evocation of 1 Corinthians 15:58. In VCA ii.6, the anonymous author noted that Cuthbert, in prophecy, said 'O beloved brethren, if any temptation should suddenly arise outside, be *stabilis* and do not run out and be prevented from hearing the word of God, nor be hindered by an illusion'.<sup>242</sup> Following his prophecy, demonic flames appeared to engulf the house in which he was preaching. 1 Corinthians 15, on the resurrection, concludes with Paul instructing the Corinthians to be *stabilis*, to have perseverance in the faith and be strengthened in it, because of the testimony of the resurrection.<sup>243</sup> Thus, the anonymous author stated that Cuthbert

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<sup>239</sup> VCP 1: *repente unus de paruulis triennis ferme ut uidebatur accurrit ad eum, et quasi senili Constantia coepit hortari ne iocis et otio indulgeret, sed stabilitati potius mentem simul et membra subiugaret.*

<sup>240</sup> VCA i.3: *esto stabilis, et relinque uanitatem ioci amare.*

<sup>241</sup> *Stabilitas* as a quality of the soul in monastic perfection is found in the *Life of St Anthony*, discussed Leclercq, "Stability", 96.

<sup>242</sup> VCA ii.6: *o fratres karissimi, si aliqua temptatio exorta foris repente extiterit, uos tamen stabiles estote, nec foras currentes a uerbi Dei auditione tardamini, per inlusionem prohibiti.*

<sup>243</sup> 1 Corinthians 15:58: 'therefore, my beloved, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord, because you know that in the Lord your labour is not in vain', *itaque fratres mei dilecti*

instructed his followers likewise to have the firmness and perseverance of faith to overcome the instinct to run from the illusion of demonic flames. In the earlier episode, and following this scriptural lead, it might also be that the anonymous author intended to express Cuthbert's perseverance or solidity in faith and behaviour instead of, or as well as, his monastic character.

Nothing else in the Northumbrian hagiographical corpus called upon the vocabulary of *stabilitas*.<sup>244</sup> It is not just the Northumbrian hagiographical corpus that contains little in the way of the language of stability. The missionary hagiographies do not call upon the language of stability, and it is similarly not a feature of Hiberno-Latin hagiography. The two uses of the terminology across the considered Irish corpus demonstrate the use of the adjective *stabilis* and the adjectivally used participle *stabiliens*, both in contexts of steadying.<sup>245</sup> Therefore, in Ireland, *stabilitas* neither appears in contexts paralleling the Anglo-Saxon usage, that is, of steadfastness of character or the eternal kingdom, nor is there an engagement with the supposed 'Benedictine' meaning of locative fixity.

Alcuin, by contrast, made wide-ranging use of *stabilitas* in his *Epistolae*. He invoked it as a metaphorical condition in opposition to waves and tempests, although it is not

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*stabiles estote et immobiles abundantes in opere Domini semper scientes quod labor vester non est inanis in Domino.*

<sup>244</sup> Stephen twice called upon the adverbial form of *stabilis*. VW 1: At Wilfrid's birth, a woman of the house said: "hold back *stabilter* and wait, for an infant has just been born into this world", "*sustinete, stabilter expectantes; ecce modo infans huic natus est mundo*". VW 52: In Rome, the accusations against Wilfrid were listened to *stabilter*.

<sup>245</sup> In his *Vita Patricii* ii.11(9), Muirchú narrated how an angel advises that Patrick should be buried wherever a pair of untamed oxen carry it, and so 'untamed oxen were chosen and they steadily drew the cart', *instabiles electi sunt iuenci et stabili plaustrum*. In Adomnán, *Vita Columbae* ii.32 Adomnán narrated how Columba brought a boy back to life in a demonstration of the superiority of the Christian God. 'St Columba took hold of the boy's hand, raised him to his feet and, steadying him, led him out of the house'. *Cujus manum tenens apostolicus homo erexit, et in statione stabiliens secum domum egressus deducit*.

his only use of the term. For example, twice in letters to Angilbert, abbot of St Riquier, Alcuin wrote invoking perpetual *stabilitas*. In the first example, he wrote ‘I, a wave-tossed man, send greetings to my sweetest son. When you departed, I frequently tried to reach a port of *stabilitas*’.<sup>246</sup> The letter reminds Angilbert to return from Rome with relics, and to make prayers on Alcuin’s behalf whilst he was there. This allegorical use of *stabilitas* did not engage with place. This is emphasized when Alcuin called himself a *vir fluctivagus* ‘a wave-tossed man’ or more literally ‘a man who wanders the sea’. At this time, he remained in a single place and wrote to a traveller; he was not the traveller himself. He, therefore, invoked a metaphorical condition. However, Alcuin’s instability is a rhetorical device expressing his loss at the absence of Angilbert. Here, he used the dichotomy of the *stabilitas* of a port against the waves within an emotive context, although as the language carries the metaphor of the eternal compared with this life, there is a dual reading intended. The second occasion is a letter from Charlemagne to Angilbert, in which the letter-writer sought simply to be worthy of ‘the calm of perpetual *stabilitas*’.<sup>247</sup>

To another churchman and scholar, Paulinus of Aquileia, Alcuin wrote similarly,

Truly, we entreat at the end of this letter that which we wished for at the top – that you may be deemed worthy to steer the ship of our holy life by your prayers. Because the storm drives us here and there like the roughness of worldly affairs, we seek to overcome falsehoods in the ocean of the deepest abyss by calmness. But, the venerable Father, pious helmsman of all things and always a lover of human salvation, who is persuaded by your tears, allows us, who are unworthy, to avoid the dangers of this wave-tossed sea. When we have made our successfully voyage, He allows us to come with full rewards to His position of perpetual *stabilitas*.<sup>248</sup>

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<sup>246</sup> Alcuin, *Epistolae*. Dümmler 97: *dulcissimo filio vir fluctivagus salutem. Te abeunte temptavi saepius ad portum stabilitatis venire.*

<sup>247</sup> Alcuin, *Epistolae*. Dümmler 92: *perpetuae stabilitatis quietem.*

<sup>248</sup> Alcuin, *Epistolae*. Dümmler 60: *in calce vero cartulae huius obsecramus, quod in capite optamus, quatenus nostrae navigium vitae sanctitatis vestrae orationibus gubernare digneris. Nam pro celloso*

Here he engaged in more detail with concepts of the ship upon the stormy sea and the conclusion of life as perpetual stability. Writing to Arno, bishop of Salzburg, Alcuin said:

My mind is restless with various thoughts, hoping to come to you, adviser, just as to a port of firm *stabilitas*. But, as I see it, my mind is carried off by waves away from the calm that it desires, it was driven into the sea, and will arrive at that port unknowingly.<sup>249</sup>

Although he calls upon the contrast between *stabilitas* and the waves and sea, this is also an example of Alcuin's use of *stabilitas* as a quality of the mind. Stability of character or mind expresses steadfastness and firmness. In a further example, writing to Charlemagne, Alcuin praised him saying 'may the *stabilitas* of your most noble mind endure perpetually in one and the same stronghold of solidity, and may your mind's *stabilitas* thrive in the middle of justice with unshaken balance and strength'.<sup>250</sup> In a later letter to Charlemagne, Alcuin wrote about the fragility of humanity, hoping that 'he might unite his whole self in the *stabilitas* of his spirit' so that he might be restored for salvation.<sup>251</sup>

*Stabilitas* of kingdoms likewise engages with the characteristic of firmness, this time of establishments, their durability, and their permanence. Writing to Coenwulf, king of Mercia, Alcuin discussed restoring the once exalted position of the English people, lost due to its sins, 'with *stabilitas* for the present kingdom and strength against

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*saecularium negotiorum tempestas huc illucque nos agitat, falsa nos tranquillitate in salo profundissimae voraginis submergere quaerens. Sed pius omnium gubernator rerum et humanae semper amator salutis, tuis, pater venerande, exoratus lacrimis, nos licet indignos huius fluctivagi pericula maris evadere faciat et ad perpetuae stabilitatis stationem prospero cursu plenius mercedibus pervenire concedat.*

<sup>249</sup> Alcuin, *Epistolae*. Dümmler 59: *mens variis fluctuat cogitationibus, te consiliatorem quasi portum firmæ stabilitatis sperans venire, sed ut video, longius a quiete optata fluctibus rapitur, in salo agitur, ad quem portum perveniet ignorans.*

<sup>250</sup> Alcuin, *Epistolae*. Dümmler 149: *vestrae mentis nobilissima stabilitas in una eademque soliditatis arce perpetualiter permaneat et in medio aequitatis libramine inconcussa fortitudine vigeat.*

<sup>251</sup> Alcuin, *Epistolae*. Dümmler 229: *tota se conferat in stabilitatem animae suae.*

enemies’ so that the Church can grow.<sup>252</sup> In a letter to Charlemagne, Alcuin praised ‘the *stabilitas* of his God-given reign’.<sup>253</sup> Moreover, institutional *stabilitas* can be expressed for the Church on earth, as well as for the eternal kingdom. For example, in a letter to Pope Leo III, Charlemagne praised his election as being ‘for the *stabilitas* of the whole church’.<sup>254</sup> *Stabilitas* also referred to safety and security, building upon its meaning of steady constancy. Writing to Arno upon his receipt of the pallium, Alcuin rejoiced to hear that Arno was ‘in most sublime *stabilitas* of ecclesiastical esteem’.<sup>255</sup> This sense of *stabilitas* as security is made more apposite in two of Alcuin’s later letters to Charlemagne that expressed concern over the security of the person of Charlemagne and his empire.<sup>256</sup>

DMLBS’s assessment of *stabilitas* confirms that it refers to steadiness, standing firm, firmness, or permanence of institutions or decrees, and constancy of character or mind in the eighth century.<sup>257</sup> The examples that illustrate ‘Benedictine’ *stabilitas loci* date at the earliest to the eleventh century.<sup>258</sup> From within the same semantic range, DMLBS notes that *stabilis* refers to standing firm within a Benedictine context, providing an example from Alcuin, *Epistola* 205.<sup>259</sup> However, the full context of the

<sup>252</sup> Alcuin, *Epistolae*. Dümmler 123: *praesentis regni stabilitatem et contra inimicos fortitudinem*.

<sup>253</sup> Alcuin, *Epistolae*. Dümmler 174: *de stabilitate regni vobis a Deo dati*.

<sup>254</sup> Alcuin, *Epistolae*. Dümmler 93: *pro totius ecclesiae stabilitate*.

<sup>255</sup> Alcuin, *Epistolae*. Dümmler 173: *in honoris ecclesiastici sublimissima stare stabilitate*.

<sup>256</sup> Alcuin, *Epistolae*. Dümmler 231; Allott 52: ‘nor do I believe my prayers for your *stabilitas* and security are in vain in the sight of God’, *nec meas pro vestra stabilitate et salute cassatas in conspectu Dei credo*. Dümmler 249; Allott 116: ‘I have not seen other men anywhere worshipping more correctly or praying more conscientiously for your preservation and the *stabilitas* of the Christian Empire’. *Perfectius non vidi alios in quolibet loco celebrantes nec diligentius consuetudine cotidiana pro vestra incolomitate et christiani imperii stabilitate intercedere*.

<sup>257</sup> DMLBS s.v. *stabilitas*, 1, 2, and 5.

<sup>258</sup> DMLBS s.v. *stabilitas*, 3.b provides examples from Anselm (c. 1033-1109), Ailred of Rivaulx (ob. 1167), Adam Scot (fl. 1180-1200), and *The Latin Text of Ancrene Riwe*, attributed to S. Gaunt (early fourteenth century).

<sup>259</sup> DMLBS s.v. *stabilis*, 3.b.

quote given suggests that *stabilis* is being used within a scriptural framework rather than a Benedictine one, and by that, it refers to steadfastness of character.

*Epistola* 205 was written to the abbots and monks of Gothia probably in Septimania near the border with Spain to aid them in the struggle against Adoptionism, the belief, espoused by Iberian Christians and strongly opposed in Carolingian territories, that Christ was adopted by God.<sup>260</sup> Alcuin recommended *stabilitas* and that the monks should remain at their monasteries. The sentence that has been interpreted within a ‘Benedictine’ context is ‘and be *stabilis* in your places, where you gave yourselves to God; and do not depart your monasteries and do not be empty because of the nothingness of the world’.<sup>261</sup> Certainly, Alcuin called upon his readers to be steadfast and to remain in place, but this is a matter of remaining strong in faith as a defence against heretics through maintaining control of the monasteries. *Stabilis* in faith in this instance equates to enduring, and keeping the cycle of monastic life.<sup>262</sup> Alcuin went on to quote scripture. 1 Corinthians 15:58 and Psalm 26:14 (27:14) both invoke strength and standing firm for the Lord. In 1 Corinthians 15:58, on the resurrection of the body, as discussed above, Paul appealed to the Corinthians to be *stabilis* and *immobilis*, because the truth of their labours for the Lord was made known through the resurrection.<sup>263</sup> The psalmist in Psalm 26:14 (27:14) states: ‘wait for the Lord; be

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<sup>260</sup> For a full discussion of Spanish Adoptionism, see John C. Cavadini, *The Last Christology of the West: Adoptionism in Spain and Gaul, 785-820* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993).

<sup>261</sup> Alcuin, *Epistolae*. Dümmler 205: *et stabiles estote in locis vestris, ubi vosmetipsos dedistis Deo; et nolite deserere monasteria vestra et vacare per seculi vanitates.*

<sup>262</sup> Alcuin, *Epistolae*. Dümmler 205: ‘only in the strength of faith and without hesitating – because without faith it is impossible to please God, as the apostle says – observe the most earnest brotherly love between you, and unity in all catholic peace, and unfeigned true faith and humility. And keep obedience following your purpose of regular monastic life with all enthusiasm’; *tantum in fidei firmitate et nil hesitantes – quia sine fide impossibile est Deo placere, ut apostolus ait – caritatem fraternam instantissime inter vos servate, et unitatem in omni catholica pace et fide recta et humilitate non ficta. Et obedienciam vestram secundum propositum regularis vite omni studio servate.*

<sup>263</sup> 1 Corinthians 15:58: ‘therefore, my beloved, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord, because you know that in the Lord your labour is not in vain’; *itaque fratres mei dilecti*

strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord'.<sup>264</sup> Alcuin echoed this: 'watch and stand in faith, be strong, and He will strengthen your heart in every good work'.<sup>265</sup> There is no suggestion here that it is for principles of monastic *stabilitas loci* that Alcuin directed these monks to stay in their monasteries. Instead, Alcuin recommended that the constancy of correct doctrine and theology was outwardly reflected through physical constancy. Through remaining, God would strengthen their position.

### 1.1.3. A Monastic *Stabilitas*

*Stabilitas* carried a variety of meanings. Within RB, it can be seen to symbolize virtue or personal characteristics. It perhaps intended to signify a particular aspect of the monastic lifestyle. Bede did not engage with a monastic idea of *stabilitas*. However, he, like Benedict, used *stabilitas* to refer to a personal characteristic, of both individuals and collectives. This might have been a direct personal quality or might describe their mind, actions, or faith. Whilst *stabilitas* itself does not seem to be a virtue in Bede's usage, virtues might be *stabilis*. For Bede, the Church and those amongst the elect who were most perfect might achieve *stabilitas*, but it was the eternal Church and heaven itself which was *stabilis* and most often associated with *stabilitas*. In contrast to it, the present life is the turbulence of the sea with its waves and storms. Within the hagiographical corpus, *stabilitas* and *stabilis*, are personal and collective characteristics of the faithful. However, this is only within the context of Cuthbert's *vitae*. The author of VCA made two uses of the word *stabilis*, one of which made its

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*stabiles estote et immobiles abundantes in opere Domini semper scientes quod labor vester non est inanis in Domino.*

<sup>264</sup> Psalm 26:14: *expecta Dominum confortare et roboretur cor tuum et sustine Dominum.*

<sup>265</sup> Alcuin, *Epistolae*. Dümmler 205: *vigilate et state in fide, viriliter agite, et confortetur cor vestrum in omni opere bono.*



way into Bede's VCP, although Bede preferred to use the term *stabilitas*. When Alcuin's letters are considered to broaden the semantic range, *stabilitas* can additionally refer to the strength and steadfastness of an institution. *Stabilitas* is not immobility; it is a divine or personal attribute.

The application of ideas of *stabilitas loci* to early medieval monasticism is anachronistic. The process by which *stabilitas loci* emerged as a monastic principle is in need of investigation, but it is clear that it did not come about before or during this period.<sup>266</sup> *Stabilitas* as a vow, or as a facet of monasticism, did not limit monks geographically. Throughout the texts examined in this chapter, *stabilitas* was variously used to refer to firmness, steadfastness, and permanence of both character and institutions. In particular, an important facet of *stabilitas* is as an expression of the eternal kingdom. Therefore, importantly, monks did not make vows of geographical fixity, nor does *stabilitas* refer to being stationary. This is not to say that seventh- and eighth-century monks were vagrant, or subscribed to ideals of wandering asceticism, but that there was no conflict in principle between monasticism and travel.

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<sup>266</sup> In the West at least. Daniel Caner, in his discussion of Late Antique wandering, points out that *stabilitas loci* was a secular ideal in the late Roman world that promoted economic and social stability in the imperial domain, and that such civic policies influenced contemporary church leaders who equated heresies with behaviours that were deviant in the Roman social order. However, there is a gap between this principle and the medieval Benedictine *stabilitas loci*. In his discussion of wandering monks, *stabilitas loci* makes a brief appearance as a facet of the Egyptian tradition. He also notes that in the Byzantine world, the fourth canon of the council held at Chalcedon in 451 made provisions that only monks who remained in monasteries approved by the local bishop would be recognized, whilst those who wandered would face excommunication. He notes that commentators have observed that this made *stabilitas loci* official orthodox monastic practice. See *Wandering, Begging Monks: Spiritual Authority and the Promotion of Monasticism in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 15-16, 20, 238-39.

## 1.2. Bede's Attitude towards Travel

*Stabilitas loci* was not a feature of early medieval monasticism.<sup>267</sup> Thus, it is not immediately obvious how monastic individuals construed travel, or the role of movement in their lives and work. This chapter considers Bede's attitude towards travel, focussing on the necessity of travel and its role in a monastic framework of obedience. There is no need for modern scholars to explain the mobility of travelling monastic individuals against their vow of *stabilitas*. However, monastic individuals were not simply able to journey freely. The engagement of monks with concepts of their own movement was more dynamic than the mere divergence between mobility and fixity.

*Stabilitas* may not have bounded a monk physically within the surrounds of the monastery. However, our eighth-century authors were part of a Christian tradition that condemned religious wandering for its own sake. Despite this, condemnation is not a feature of narrative engagement with travel. This chapter explores Bede's personal attitude to travel through the prism of his Homily on Benedict Biscop, associated with Matthew 19:27-29.<sup>268</sup> This homily highlights the close balance between the necessity of movement for the governance and prestige of a monastery and concern not to

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<sup>267</sup> See above, Chapter 1.1.

<sup>268</sup> *Hom.* i.13. Matthew 19:27-29: 'then Peter said in reply, "Look, we have left everything and followed you. What then will we have?" Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man is seated on the throne of his glory, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold, and will inherit eternal life". *Tunc respondens Petrus dixit ei ecce nos reliquimus omnia et secuti sumus te quid ergo erit nobis Iesus autem dixit illis amen dico vobis quod vos qui secuti estis me in regeneratione cum sederit Filius hominis in sede maiestatis suae sedebitis et vos super sedes duodecim iudicantes duodecim tribus Israel et omnis qui reliquit domum vel fratres aut sorores aut patrem aut matrem aut uxorem aut filios aut agros propter nomen meum centuplum accipiet et vitam aeternam possidebit.*

encourage travel for its own sake. Bede is traditionally viewed as a static individual, in contrast to his dynamic abbot, Biscop. However, it is clear that whilst Bede had concerns about excessive monastic travelling, he did not seek to eradicate it. Bede's attitudes towards travel might be understood in the light of narrated motivations for travelling expressed by the hagiographical subjects of his and his contemporaries' works. The narrators infrequently considered motivations, which is suggestive that there was no overt need to justify travel for their monastic audience. Bede did not often write about travel, and it is important to consider the rationale behind that. He sought not to unduly praise an itinerant life on the road out of concern for monastic obedience. However, he did not condemn travel or monastic travel itself.

Some Late Antique authors wrote expressly against a tradition of itinerant monasticism. Maribel Dietz has discussed this earlier tradition, the ideas of exile and pilgrimage, and their impact in the fourth through the sixth century at length.<sup>269</sup> Her work takes in the range of religiously motivated travel in Late Antiquity, with emphasis on travellers from the Iberian Peninsula, and explains its context. In particular, she is interested in the uniquely monastic and ascetic impulse to travel that sought spiritual fulfilment and was open to accusations of instability, and dangerous ill-defined wandering. She outlines a theologically motivated form of itinerant monasticism that explains the shadowy and condemned character of the *gyrovagus*. Opposition to wandering monasticism provides the best evidences for it. Dietz charts this opposition as beginning in the fourth century with legislation that connected and condemned desertion and false monasticism.<sup>270</sup> Restrictions were placed on itinerancy by church

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<sup>269</sup> For a discussion of the western Christian intellectual context for monastic travel, see Dietz, *Wandering Monks*, 11-41.

<sup>270</sup> *Ibid.*, 36-7.

councils through the fourth and fifth centuries, which included the introduction of the idea that all clergy ought to be brought under the control of bishops.<sup>271</sup>

Further to the argument made in 1.1, that a monastic concept of stability did not equate to locative fixity, Bede's attitude to travel ought to be framed with reference to mobility in his own environment, not by a binary opposition between the mobility of the secular compared to the fixity of the monastic. No clear opposition to wandering or journeying is found in Bede's writings. However, the traditional view has been that at least for himself Bede was immobile. Nicholas Howe, for example, maintained that Bede was focussed on 'the essential matter of place by abjuring the distractions of travel or aimless wandering in the mapped world'.<sup>272</sup> He noted Bede's biographical note in HE, which records a lifetime of monastic scholarship, as evidence: 'I have spent all my life in this monastery, applying myself entirely to the study of the Scriptures'.<sup>273</sup> The same biographical note is evidence to Gleason of 'Bede's own sedentary but determined achievements'.<sup>274</sup> However, Bede's note indicating that he spent all his life in one monastery is surely presented in contrast to the seemingly more usual monastic career of high profile individuals that saw them live and work in multiple communities over the duration of their lifetime. The evidence of Bede's other writings overturns such an assumption about his geographical fixity.

There is certainly no aimless travel narrated in HE, but that is explained by the narrative process more than by an interpretation of fixity or opposition to movement.<sup>275</sup>

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<sup>271</sup> Ibid., 38.

<sup>272</sup> Howe, *Writing the Map*, 131.

<sup>273</sup> HE v.24: *vitae in eiusdem monasterii habitatione peragens, omnem meditandis scripturis operam dedi.*

<sup>274</sup> Gleason, "Bede".

<sup>275</sup> This is the focus of Part 2 of this thesis.

A suggestion that Bede avoided the ‘distractions of travel’ is inaccurate. Not only are his narratives based on events that all required mobility, but he also engaged in travel himself. Howe did acknowledge that Bede travelled within Northumbria: ‘we know that Bede did travel in Northumbria on occasion to gather material for his *Ecclesiastical History*; he went as far afield as a day or two’s journey to such religious centres as Lindisfarne and York’.<sup>276</sup> Northumbria likely bounds the known journeys that Bede undertook. There is no overt expression of Bede’s own travel in HE, what is known comes from VCP and his letters. He visited Lindisfarne.<sup>277</sup> He visited Bishop Egbert of York; although the location of this visit is not known York is likely.<sup>278</sup> Likewise, he noted in another letter of a visit with Wictred, an otherwise unknown correspondent.<sup>279</sup> As so few of Bede’s letters are known, and two betray evidence of Bede’s travel, it is highly likely that he was in regular contact in person as well as by letter with various individuals across Northumbria at least.<sup>280</sup> More locally, the monasteries of Wearmouth and Jarrow sit on two distinct sites around 6 miles apart from one another, and as Nicholas Higham has pointed out, Bede and many of the brethren were likely to have been frequent travellers locally between the two sites.<sup>281</sup>

The means and habits of travelling did not elude Bede.

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<sup>276</sup> Howe, *Writing the Map*, 132.

<sup>277</sup> Known from VCP, prologue.

<sup>278</sup> Bede, *Epistola ad Ecgbertum* = *Letter to Egbert*, ed. and trans. Christopher W. Grocock and Ian N. Wood, *Abbots of Wearmouth and Jarrow* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2013), 124-161.

<sup>279</sup> Bede, *Epistola ad Wichthedum* = *Letter to Wichthed*, ed. C. W. Jones. *Opera Didascalica (Beda Venerabilis)* CCSL 123C (Turnhout: Brepols, 1980), 631-42; trans. Faith Wallis, *Bede: The Reckoning of Time* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1999), 417-24.

<sup>280</sup> There are seven known letters. Bede acknowledges five in the list of his works given in HE, these are exegetical treatises or on *computus* (*De eo quod ait Isaias* and *De mansionibus filiorum Israel* addressed to Bishop Acca; *Epistola ad Helmuualdum*, *Epistola ad Pleguinam*, and *Epistola ad Wichthedum*). Of the two further known letters, *Epistola ad Albinum* accompanied copies of Bede’s HE and *DTemp* to Abbot Albinus in Canterbury, and the final is *Epistola ad Ecgbertum* to Egbert of York concerning the need for reform in the church.

<sup>281</sup> Nicholas J. Higham, *(Re-)Reading Bede: The Ecclesiastical History in Context* (London: Routledge, 2006), 14-6. Further, as discussed by Richard Morris, Jarrow and St. Paul’s were not isolated, and nor

Beyond this, there is a suggestion that Bede had experience of travel and hospitality on the road in *Hom.* i.13, on the feast of Benedict Biscop. Writing for his brothers in the form of a homily, Bede stated:

We have often experienced an example of this matter (i.e. Christ's love through the faithful's service of one another in mutual love) for ourselves, most beloved brothers, when we have gone away to some place on urgent business and found every monastic dwelling open to us as if they were our own.<sup>282</sup>

This brief statement leads into the exploration of Biscop as a particular example of a monk travelling. It would seem to suggest that Bede and his brethren were not infrequent travellers themselves, on business, on occasions when things were *necessitas*. It is also evidence of monastic hospitality as it should be with monasteries open and catering to passing monks. This hospitality is, according to Bede, an expression of serving one another in mutual love, for Christ's sake.<sup>283</sup>

The motivations for travel expressed in hagiographies further support Bede's positive outlook on travel. These narrated motivations for travel may demonstrate models of acceptable reasons for travelling. Motives and intentions might also be used to show the piety of actions that otherwise were laid open to criticism. Thus, if there were arguments against travel contemporaneous with the writing of hagiographies of saints who travelled, the *vitae* ought to engage with them and retrospectively justify behaviour that might be seen as inappropriate. However, little in the narrated

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were they solitary, there was a cluster of monasteries in close proximity, as well as a likely royal site and the potential for industry and trade close by. Morris paints the picture of Jarrow as a hub of movement, which would have had an impact not just on the ease with which monks there could have travelled, but with how travel was conceptualised at Jarrow. See Morris, *Journeys*.

<sup>282</sup> *Hom.* i.13: *cuius rei et in nobis ipsis, fratres carissimi, saepe exemplum sumpsimus cum alicubi pro rerum necessitate digredientes cuncta nobis monasteriorum habitacula quasi propria patere cognouimus.*

<sup>283</sup> For a discussion of the corporal acts of mercy in relation to *peregrinatio* as a specific form of justifiable monastic travel, see section 1.3.2.

motivations of travellers suggests their use as models upon which to base an expression of interest in travelling or to dispel ideas opposed to travel. Additionally, the scarcity of motivations expressed in narratives is suggestive that there was no overarching ecclesiastical need for the justification of journeying.

Kings were treated differently from saints; Bede's explanation of what drove kings to desire travel to Rome focussed upon a love of apostolic customs, or a need to be near the saintly apostles or their holy places.<sup>284</sup> The Northumbrian king Oswiu had intended to go to Rome if he recovered from his illness because he had become attached to Roman customs and wanted to end his life among holy places.<sup>285</sup> Whilst this marks the end of Oswiu's personal faith journey, his expressed reasoning is similar to that of other kings who did go to Rome. Cædwalla, king of the West Saxons, 'was anxious to gain the special privilege of being washed in the fountain of baptism within the threshold of the apostles'.<sup>286</sup> He gave up his throne for the sake of the Lord and to win an everlasting kingdom. His successor, Ine, wanted to spend time near the holy places so that he might be thought worthy of great welcome from the saints in heaven.<sup>287</sup> Here then, Bede felt it was necessary to justify these kings' desire to visit Rome. Where their local journeys are not worthy of comment, the long-distance journey that retired them from their kingdom was socially substantial. The significance of Rome and their devotional intentions are invoked to explain the social shift that this travel brought about and to justify it.

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<sup>284</sup> For the importance of Rome to Bede and his contemporaries in the context of travel to Rome, see the discussion in Chapter 2.3.

<sup>285</sup> HE iv.5.

<sup>286</sup> HE v.7: *hoc sibi glorie singularis desiderans adipisci, ut ad limina beatorum apostolorum fonte baptismatis ablueretur.*

<sup>287</sup> HE v.7.

Amongst holy men, contrastingly, the reasons for travelling to Rome tend not to be similarly expressed. There is, therefore, less emphasis placed on the significance of their journeys and thus the journeys themselves do not demonstrate equivalent social tensions. For the ecclesiastical traveller, the motivation to travel did not need to be explained to the same extent. Only Wilfrid, amongst the travellers that Bede and his contemporaries narrated, was described as being motivated to travel to Rome in similar terms. Stephen wrote that in travelling to Rome, Wilfrid 'believed that he would cleanse himself from every blot and stain and receive the joy of the divine blessing'.<sup>288</sup> Whilst Bede wrote that when he went to Eanflæd, the Northumbrian queen who initially had placed him in the monastery of Lindisfarne, 'he told her of his desire to visit the shrines of the blessed apostles'.<sup>289</sup> The absence of similar statements elsewhere is striking in light of the claims of royal interest in Rome. This is suggestive that the solemnity of a king retiring to Rome required an explanation and justification, both for the monastic audience that formed the hagiographers' primary audience and for the high-status secular audience who heard these episodes from HE.<sup>290</sup> However, the travels of holy men did not incur the same rationalization or introspection. Instead, when the motivations of Northumbrian ecclesiastic and monastic travellers are expressed it tends to be in the context of prestigious items and ideas that they collected for their institutions. Thus, the development of prestige within any ecclesiastical *familia* was more important than any potential unrest that the absence of the *familia*'s head may have caused.

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<sup>288</sup> VW 3: *omnem nodum maculae solvendum sibi credens et beatitudinem benedictionis accipiendam.*

<sup>289</sup> HE v.19: *indicaui ei desiderium sibi inesse beatorum apostolorum limina uisitandi.*

<sup>290</sup> For the social meaning of the retirement of kings, see Clare Stancliffe, "Kings Who Opted Out", in *Ideal and Reality in Frankish and Anglo-Saxon Society: Studies Presented to J.M. Wallace-Hadrill*, ed. Patrick Wormald, et al. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983), 154-76.



Learning is often expressed as an outcome of the journey to Rome, but rarely narrated as an intention. Stephen gave Wilfrid the words to express his departure from Lyon in terms of learning ‘the rules of ecclesiastical discipline’ for the Northumbrian nation.<sup>291</sup> Bede also included Wilfrid’s desire to learn, because he knew the practice on Lindisfarne was not perfect, ‘he resolved to go to Rome to see what ecclesiastical and monastic practices were observed in the apostolic see’.<sup>292</sup> In addition to Wilfrid, only Willibrord and Ceolfrith amongst the Northumbrian corpus were motivated by learning, according to their narratives.<sup>293</sup> Biscop alone was expressed as being motivated to travel to Rome to acquire physical objects, although many travellers were noted to have returned with property. Before expressing the results of Biscop’s trip, Bede observed that he went to Rome from Britain ‘so that this tireless provider might bring back from the area around Rome attractive and useful items for his church which could not be found even in Gaul’.<sup>294</sup> That this was adequate reasoning for making a journey is remarkable.

Biscop’s travel also resulted in earthly gains for his monastery, as well as liturgical and educational gains. Bede outlined the extent of the objects with which Biscop returned in HA. Initially in HA 4, he brought back books that he both purchased and was gifted. He later travelled with, as we have noted, the express intention of obtaining

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<sup>291</sup> VW 4: *ecclesiasticae disciplinae regulae*.

<sup>292</sup> HE v.19: *proposuitque animo uenire Romam, et qui ad sedem apostolicam ritus ecclesiastici siue monasteriales seruarentur, uidere*.

<sup>293</sup> VCeol 10: the anonymous author notes that Ceolfrith ‘accompanied [Biscop] on the journey, wishing to learn the duty associated with his position more completely at Rome than he could in Britain’. *Comitatus est autem [...] euntem, cupiens sui gradus officium plenius Romae quam in Britannia poterat ediscere; relictus uero est ad tuitionem monasterii, donec redirent*; HE v.11: Bede said Willibrord ‘wished both to learn about and obtain many other things’, *ibi discere uel inde accipere cupiebat*. Most of all, the practicality of needing to travel to receive Pope Sergius’s approval motivated Willibrord to travel.

<sup>294</sup> HA 6: *ut ea quoque quae nec in Gallia quidem repperiri ualebant, Romanis e finibus ecclesiae suae prouisor impiger ornamenta uel munimenta conferret*.

materials, and returned with books, relics, a singing teacher, the letter of privilege from Pope Agatho, and paintings.<sup>295</sup> A further return included the import of additional books and images along with silk cloaks.<sup>296</sup> The homily, too, deals with these material gains. Bede boasted of Biscop's material gains, against those who made similar journeys without obtaining rich resources: 'having crossed the sea so many times he never returned empty-handed or profitless, as is the habit of some'.<sup>297</sup> Bede justified the lavishness of what was obtained by its practicality. In speaking here to his brethren, Bede was clear that each item with which Biscop returned, and which his brethren would have had knowledge of in their daily lives, served a dual purpose. It could both beautify and educate, it could raise the prestige of Wearmouth and Jarrow whilst allowing the monastery to be greater in its glorification of God.

The development of individual *regula mixta* at monasteries across Europe, referencing practices that were learned on visits to a number of monasteries, is itself evidence of extensive travel by monastic founders and leaders. The origins of a community's *regula* was proudly tied to the authority and prestige of the founder, and therefore of importance of his travels. In the example of Biscop, Bede and the anonymous author of VCeol both emphasized that Biscop learned his monastic practice through observation in seventeen other monasteries.<sup>298</sup> Others, too, learned or developed their monastic knowledge by travelling to and staying in a range of monastic houses.<sup>299</sup>

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<sup>295</sup> HA 6.

<sup>296</sup> HA 9.

<sup>297</sup> *Hom.* i.13, §12: *toties mari transito numquam ut est consuetudinis quibusdam uacuu et inutilis rediit.*

<sup>298</sup> See HA 2, 4, and 11; *Hom.* i.13; and VCeol 6.

<sup>299</sup> For example, in HE v.20, Bede adds Acca to his ecclesiastical figures who learned in Rome. Acca 'learned many valuable things about the institutions of the holy Church which he could not have learned in his native land', *multa illic, quae in patria nequieverat, ecclesiae sanctae institutis utilia didicit.* Outside the Northumbrian corpus, within the lives of the Anglo-Saxon missionaries learning monastic practice by visiting monasteries and through lived experience is similarly influenced. Both Sturm, abbot of Fulda, and Willibald learn monastic practice in Rome and Monte Cassino. Sturm visited all the

Lived experience and witness of practice, rule, and doctrine were among the best ways to gain knowledge of practice and authority of it. This is demonstrated in Bede's reference to the Ninian, one of the missionaries to the Picts, who was 'a Briton who had received orthodox instruction at Rome in the faith and mysteries of the truth'.<sup>300</sup> Those southern Picts who claimed their Christian heritage through Ninian sought to establish their orthodoxy, heritage, and authority over those Picts who received their Christianity from the Irish. In the same way, claims of authenticity, antiquity, and orthodoxy via Biscop, Ceolfrith, Wilfrid, and Acca established the milieu of Rome as the root of learned practice. All of this serves to demonstrate that monasticism in this period was derived from, and both took and expressed its authority through mobility.<sup>301</sup>

For the most part, Bede's writings on Biscop have little to say about the abbot's motivation for travelling. Bede only really engaged with Biscop's motives for travel in *Hom.* i.13. Bede gave a solitary motive for Biscop's first journey, that which he undertook with Wilfrid. Bede said on this occasion that he went to Rome 'in order to take up a more perfect manner of living there where the glorious head of the whole

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monasteries in Rome and spent a year enquiring into customs and observances and traditions. Eigil, *Vita Sturmi*, trans. C. H. Talbot, in *Soldiers of Christ*, ed. Thomas F. X. Noble and Thomas Head (London: Sheed & Ward, 1995). See Chapter 14 in particular. Although being described as a natural monk, when he established his own monastery at Eichstätt, Willibald's monastic credentials are based on the practices that he had seen and lived at Monte Cassino and other monastic houses. For Willibald the natural monk and his application of learned experience, see Hygeburg, *Vita Willibaldi* 5 and 6 respectively. Despite Hygeburg describing aspects of the physicality of many churches that Willibald visited on his journey, she does not engage with practice or mention holy people met, so this seems somewhat sudden, tacked on in passing, perhaps as justification of the travel.

<sup>300</sup> HE iii.4: *de natione Brettonum, qui erat Romae regulariter fidem et mysteria ueritatis edoctus*. For a full discussion of the eighth-century attempt to manipulate 'Ninian' into the Roman tradition, see James E. Fraser, "Northumbrian Whithorn and the Making of St. Ninian", *The Innes Review* 53, no. 1 (2002): 40-59.

<sup>301</sup> Gleason proposed the opposite thesis; he wrote 'Biscop [...] is the exception to traditional ideals of silence, solitude, and stability'. He comments on the spiritual cost of Biscop's travel, and Bede's relief that he did not need to travel. He does acknowledge that Bede's scholarly position was only made viable by Biscop's travel, but only to note it as irony. He does not have an opinion on how monasticism with its 'traditional ideals' ought to be established or flourish. Gleason, "Bede", 229-30.

Church shines forth through the most exalted apostles of Christ'.<sup>302</sup> Bede also noted that Biscop would have remained in Rome indefinitely, but he was instructed to return to Britain accompanying Archbishop Theodore. Here Bede condensed three of Biscop's journeys to Rome into one. He created the image of a man who sought the correct doctrine for himself, and his own development. God's will guided Biscop and made him a vehicle for the betterment of Christianity in Northumbria. This spiritual reasoning is given only in the homily in praise of Biscop, thus here it serves a purpose in honouring the Wearmouth founder. Unlike the image present in HA with its emphasis on Biscop's material gains, the homily opened by pressing heavily on the idea that Biscop intended to live in Rome as a *peregrinus*, rather than focussing on his journeying.

Bede praised Biscop for his journeys to Rome. The homily focussed on Biscop whilst engaging in a discussion of the process of judgement and joys of salvation found in Matthew 19:16-30 (and Mark 10:17-30, Luke 18:18-30). These passages relate to the episode concerning the rich and the kingdom of God, in which Jesus taught his disciples about the reward that is to come. The rejection of the world conveyed in the conclusion of these, after Matthew 19:29, is understood as an expression of monasticism.<sup>303</sup>

[Biscop] left his houses and the fields he had owned for Christ's sake, since he hoped to receive from him a field of paradise that ever grows green and a house not made by hands, but an eternal one in heaven. He left his wife and sons in that though he had not taken a wife and had sons born by her,

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<sup>302</sup> *Hom. i.13, §7: ut [...] ibi potius perfectam uiuendi formam sumeret ubi per summos Christi apostolos totius ecclesiae caput eminent eximium.*

<sup>303</sup> Matthew 19:29: 'and everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold, and will inherit eternal life'. *Et omnis qui reliquit domum vel fratres aut sorores aut patrem aut matrem aut uxorem aut filios aut agros propter nomen meum centuplum accipiet et vitam aeternam possidebit.*

through love of chastity he still disdained taking a wife by whom he might have sons.<sup>304</sup>

Here, in praising Biscop, Bede outlined the sacrifices of monasticism. The other monks, too, would have made the same sacrifices.

Bede addressed a concern, which his brethren may have held, like that of Peter in Matthew 19:27, who demanded of Jesus what he and the other apostles would receive for their sacrifice.<sup>305</sup> Bede expanded upon the Gospel's answer and explained the reward for each worldly attachment that is rejected through the example of Biscop by reflecting upon the numerous ways in which he received a hundredfold:

And he received a hundredfold when numerous people longed to receive him in their homes as he travelled, not only in these regions but also overseas [...]. He received a hundredfold in houses and fields when he obtained these sites in which he could build his monasteries. If he had put aside a wife for Christ's sake he would also receive this hundredfold [...]. He deservedly received a hundredfold spiritual sons for the sons after the flesh he disdained to have.<sup>306</sup>

In expressing Biscop's hundredfold return, amongst other things, Bede drew attention to the gains that Biscop received on his travels. The only other traveller from Bede's histories and hagiographies who is discussed in terms stemming from Matthew 19:29 and cognates, and the receipt of a hundredfold in this life, is Offa, king of the East Saxons.<sup>307</sup> He left his wife, his lands, his kinsmen and his fatherland for Christ and for

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<sup>304</sup> *Hom. i.13, §10: reliquit domos et agros quos habuerat pro Christo a quo agrum semper uirentis paradysi et domum non manu factam sed aeternam in caelis se accipere sperabat. Reliquit uxorem et filios non quidem uxorem acceptam et filios ex ea natos sed uxorem prorsus accipere ex qua filios habere posset.*

<sup>305</sup> Matthew 19:27: "look, we have left everything and followed you. What then will we have?" *Ecce nos reliquimus omnia et secuti sumus te quid ergo erit nobis.*

<sup>306</sup> *Hom. i.13, §11: et accepit centuplum quando non in his solummodo sed et in transmarinis eum partibus plurimi suas in domos recipere uiantem [...]. Accepit centuplum domos et agros quando loca haec in quibus monasteria construeret adeptus est. Vxorem si dimisisset pro Christo et hoc centuplum acciperet [...]. Filios quos carnaliter habere dispexit centuplum accipere meruit spirituales. Centenarius quippe numerus ut saepe dictum est perfectionem figurate denuntiat.*

<sup>307</sup> HE v.19.

the Gospel in order that he might receive a hundredfold in this life. He received tonsure and ended his life in a monk's habit in Rome. Matthew 19:29 is used in the context of his receipt of tonsure not his travelling to Rome.<sup>308</sup> There is no suggestion in Bede's work that the rejection of worldly possessions took an earthly form in journeying itself, but earthly kingdoms do not restrict the earthly gains of monasticism.

Despite the praise of Biscop that engaged positively with the gains of travel, Bede was careful not to over-enthuse about travel as a way of life. In the same homily that praised Biscop's travels, he instructed his brethren not to travel but to remain within *monasterii claustra*. Bede noted that his brethren need not travel abroad because Biscop did so for them:

[Biscop] took pains to labour so hard in these and similar actions for this very reason, namely that there should remain no need at all for us to work in this way; he visited places overseas so frequently for this very reason, that we who overflow with a feast of every kind of the knowledge that brings salvation might be able to live quietly within *monasterii claustra* and serve Christ with a firmly founded freedom.<sup>309</sup>

Here Bede identified that he and his fellow brethren at Wearmouth and Jarrow were so situated that they had no need to travel. This dichotomy, between praise of Biscop's travel and this plea to remain within *monasterii claustra*, is at the heart of Bede's expression of mobility and understanding of monastic travel.

Before going further, it is necessary to return to that earlier passage in the same homily, in which Bede noted that he and his brethren had travelled and received hospitality

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<sup>308</sup> The kings who retired to Rome did so for the everlasting kingdom. Their retirements are a rejection of the world.

<sup>309</sup> *Hom. i.13, §13: qui in his et huiusmodi rebus ideo tam plura laborare studuit ne nobis aliqua sic laborandi remaneret necessitas; ideo toties transmarina loca adiit ut nos omnibus scientiae salutaris dapibus abundantes intra monasterii claustra quiescere et ecum secure libertate Christo seruire queamus.*

themselves. Biscop's travel is framed within the homily as an example of a monastic traveller, not an exception. Gleason, however, considers this remark to have been made 'with gratitude and a sense of relief that Biscop conducted all of this transmarine travel so that the rest of them would not have to'.<sup>310</sup> Rather than relief, Bede is surely tempering his praise and depiction of a highly mobile exemplar. Instead of simply praising, here Bede emphasized the labours that Biscop undertook, implying that he engaged in a form of spiritual warfare when he travelled. The dichotomy reflects Bede's view of his brethren's position. Through it, Bede exhibited his concern that amongst his brethren were those who sought unduly to imitate Biscop. The comment's focus is instead about directing the actions of them to service of Christ within *monasterii claustra* because many of them would only make the journey to Rome spiritually.

Monasteries across Anglo-Saxon England sought to emulate Rome physically and spiritually for its prestige and to access the sacred allure of Rome.<sup>311</sup> Ideas of Rome were evoked by the monastic buildings themselves, as well as by the shrines, liturgy, and practices within the buildings. The reuse of Roman stonework, and through it an association with the ancient power of Rome, is prevalent in surviving Northumbrian monastic contexts. Jarrow in particular, but monastic institutions in general, used frontier materials to legitimize their foundations linking ancient power with contemporary Rome.<sup>312</sup> Gallic-style crypts built by Wilfrid at Hexham and Ripon

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<sup>310</sup> Gleason, "Bede".

<sup>311</sup> Luisa Izzi discussed the various means by which this was achieved, in "Representing Rome. The Influence of Rome on Aspects of the Public Arts of Early Anglo-Saxon England (c. 600-800)" (PhD Thesis, University of York, 2010).

<sup>312</sup> Wood, "Bede's Jarrow", 76-8.

mimicked those in Rome.<sup>313</sup> Recent ground penetrating radar suggests that a similar crypt lies beneath the chancel at St Paul's Church Jarrow.<sup>314</sup> These early Northumbrian crypts may mimic the most famed early medieval crypt, that under the apse of Old St Peter's in Rome. Their function is to facilitate the circulation of visitors without interrupting the service above. This is important for two reasons. First, it is a strong example of an ideological connection with Rome, mediated through Gallic-style architecture. Secondly, it illustrates that these churches were constructed with the intention of bringing people to them (or perhaps in response to increasing visitor numbers), which in turn brought travellers into contact with both monastic space, and with the relics that echo back to Rome. These analogues of Rome created in Northumbria, along with the library and extensive selection of imagery that Biscop obtained, shape a strong sense of both Rome remade in Northumbria and sufficient material to work through in a lifetime. Those who travelled, contact with travellers via messengers, and the movement of books and materials across great distances, all enabled Bede and his peers' life of the mind.

Bede implored his brethren to remain within the monastery and experience the wealth of learning and spiritual things that Biscop brought back, implying that this would be the proper way to remember him and his travels. It would have been problematic if too many monks sought to leave the monastic environment, and praise of an adventurous

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<sup>313</sup> Eric Cambridge and Alan Williams, "Hexham Abbey: A Review of Recent Work and Its Implications", *Archaeologia Aeliana* 23 (5th series) (1995): 51-138, at 77-9; Eric Cambridge, "The Sources and Function of Wilfrid's Architecture at Ripon and Hexham", in *Wilfrid, Abbot, Bishop, Saint: Papers from the 1300th Anniversary Conferences*, ed. Nicholas J. Higham (Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2013), 136-51. However, Richard Bailey has recently argued that whilst many of the innovations at Hexham and Ripon derive from the Continent, the crypts may have been copies of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, based on the descriptions from DLS. See Richard N. Bailey, "St. Wilfrid, a European Anglo-Saxon", *ibid.*, 112-23.

<sup>314</sup> See Sam Turner, Sarah Semple, and Alex Turner, *Wearmouth and Jarrow: Northumbrian Monasteries in an Historic Landscape* (Hatfield: University of Hertfordshire Press, 2013), 197-8.



founder would likely inspire adventure-seeking followers. It is probable that Wearmouth and Jarrow faced interest from monks who sought to travel in the likeness of Biscop.

In *Hom.* i.13, Bede struggled to express a single clear idea on movement: the homily contains the duality of praising the gains of travel whilst simultaneously condemning it. This is likely an exaggerated position designed to ensure that he did not encourage a travelling lifestyle. Connected strands in the various hagiographies interact with apprehensions over proper discipline and ensuring that activities were undertaken for the right reason. A particular area of concern was ensuring that those who were removed from the support and security of regulated behaviour were suitably prepared and did not put themselves at risk spiritually.

Direct writing on this issue relates to anchorites. It would seem likely that travellers inspired similar disquiet, stemming from their separation from the monastic house. The physical closeness of anchorites to coenobitic monasteries highlights that even when sufficient training and example of good character had been established, the need for a relationship with other monks remained. Examples of this closeness can be seen in Cuthbert's hermitage on Farne, which was proximate to Lindisfarne,<sup>315</sup> or the Columban, Finán, whose hermitage was beside the monastery at Durrow for many years.<sup>316</sup> RB, in the outline of the kinds of monks, notes that anchorites and hermits:

Have come through the test of living in a monastery for a long time, and have passed beyond the first fervour of monastic life. Thanks to the help and guidance of many, they are now trained to fight against the devil. They

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<sup>315</sup> VCA Book iii and iv.11-3; VCP 17-22, 24-5, 37-40. Although separated by the sea, Inner Farne and Lindisfarne are proximate; the sea can be a channel of communication and movement as well as a barrier, as discussed by Petts, "Coastal Landscapes".

<sup>316</sup> Adomnán, *Vita Columbae* i.49.

have built up their strength and go from the battle line in the ranks of their brothers to the single combat of the desert.<sup>317</sup>

For logical reasons, monastic rules establish monasticism that took place outside of the safe confines of the coenobitic community as an earned privilege.<sup>318</sup> This is a warning, not a criticism of novices, about the observance of discipline and the dangers of a solitary existence. Whilst this is about eremitical practice, there is a similarity between this practice, and other forms of leaving the security of a community. For example, in his *Vita Columbae*, Adomnán can be seen to highlight distinctions between eremitical monastic voyaging and the more stable vocation of the anchorite. Westley Follett argued that Adomnán's accounts of the voyages made by members of the Ionan community, Cormac and Batián, in *Vita Columbae* reveal his misgivings about monks who wished to engage in such quests that took them beyond the secure bounds of the religious community, and which might expose them to danger.<sup>319</sup>

The idea in Bede's HE that journeys to Rome had become commonplace might inform Bede's concern over discipline and a desire to avoid mere novice-fervour. Perhaps inherent in Bede's comments was a criticism that such behaviour could be frivolous if not undertaken in line with the appropriate Christian practices and behavioural strictures. When noting that the Wessex kings Cædwalla and Ine had both left for Rome, he stated that 'at this time many Englishmen, nobles and commons, layfolk and

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<sup>317</sup> RB 1.3-5: *horum qui non conversationis fervore novicio, sed monasterii probatione diuturna, qui didicerunt contra diabolum multorum solacio iam docti pugnare, et bene extructi fraterna ex acie ad singularem pugnam eremi.*

<sup>318</sup> For example, Westley Follett has highlighted the requirement for monks to perfect their coenobitism in Isidore of Seville's and John Cassian's monastic writing, and its impact on the *Collectio Canonum Hibernensis*, in which a monk is to have proven himself for thirty years of monastic discipline before progressing to hermitage. See Westley Follett, "An Allegorical Interpretation of the Monastic Voyage Narratives in Adomnán's "Vita Columbae"", *Eolas: The Journal of the American Society of Irish Medieval Studies* 2 (2007): 4-27, at 17-22.

<sup>319</sup> Ibid.

clergy, men and women, were eager to do the same thing'.<sup>320</sup> Whilst in his praise of Oftfor, bishop of Worcester, Bede noted that he had gone to Rome 'which in those days was considered to be an act of great merit'.<sup>321</sup> This comment that many people from all lifestyles sought to leave their homes for Rome, and the potential frivolousness of such behaviour, may underlie Bede's presentation of Biscop as labouring so that those who followed him did not need to travel. It is not so much a plea for geographical fixity as it is a reminder of the exemplary behaviour demonstrated by Biscop, which must be obtained before leaving the security of the community, and a standard to which many brethren may not have adhered.

In addition to the spiritual dangers of travel, Bede was perhaps concerned with the numbers of people who sought to travel. Bede consistently outlined a vision of the Church in which its members engaged jointly with the active and contemplative lives, and consistently undertook both pastoral and missionary activities.<sup>322</sup> As Anglo-Saxon monasteries were centres of preaching, teaching and pastoral work, as well as prayer

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<sup>320</sup> HE v.7: *quod his temporibus plures de gente Anglorum, nobiles, ignobiles, laici, clerici, uiri ac feminae certatim facere consuerunt.*

<sup>321</sup> HE iv.23(21): *quod eo tempore magnae uirtutis aestimabatur.* Cædwalla and Ine abdicated and headed for Rome in 688 and 726 respectively, whilst Oftfor was made bishop in 691, so his journey was before this time. It is therefore unclear literally in which period Bede intended to mean that it was a great positive to travel to Rome compared to that in which it was a frequent occurrence.

<sup>322</sup> See in particular Thacker, "Ideal of Reform"; "Monks, Preaching and Pastoral Care"; and "Priests and Pastoral Care in Early Anglo-Saxon England", in *The Study of Medieval Manuscripts of England: Festschrift in Honor of Richard W. Pfaff*, ed. George Hardin Brown and Linda E. Voigts (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2010), 187-208. For the example of Cuthbert as the ideal balance between pastor and contemplative, see Clare Stancliffe, "Cuthbert and the Polarity between Pastor and Solitary", in *St. Cuthbert, His Cult and His Community to A.D. 1200*, ed. Gerald Bonner, D. W. Rollason, and Clare Stancliffe (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1989), 21-44 and Simon J. Coates, "The Bishop as Pastor and Solitary: Bede and the Spiritual Authority of the Monk-Bishop", *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 47, no. 04 (1996): 601-19. The debate on how early medieval English monasticism should be understood centred on pastoral organization and how widespread pastoral activities were amongst English *monasteria*. In current scholarship, the tendency is to understand early English monasticism as a broad spectrum of different institutions all of which contained some ordained members engaged in pastoral care to some degree.

and stillness, Bede understood the two lifestyles to be intertwined.<sup>323</sup> Bede's concern with bishops providing adequate care for their dispersed flocks led to his demand, in the letter to Bishop Egbert of York, for the appointment of more priests and teachers to assist in the provision of pastoral care.<sup>324</sup> There is a connection between Bede's perception that there were too few educated and moral Christians undertaking the pastoral roles, and his light criticism of travelling (to Rome). It is not to the benefit of any monastery, or Northumbria as a whole, to lose those whom they educate to the wider world.

A connection between obedience and travel specifically is expressed in seventh- and eighth-century Anglo-Saxon canons. Bede summarized the decrees of the Council of Hertford (673) in HE iv.5, two of which sought to control travel within a religious context, stating that monks required letters from their abbots and clergy from their bishops to travel and to be received while travelling.<sup>325</sup> It should be noted that in Bede's text of this canon, the monastic vow of *oboedientia* (rather than of *stabilitas*) was invoked to prohibit the wandering monk. This highlights the importance of obedience and the social structure of monastery in controlling mobility, and in necessitating its control.

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<sup>323</sup> See Scott DeGregorio, "The Venerable Bede on Prayer and Contemplation", *Traditio* 54 (1999): 1-39, at 26-29. He outlines the continuum formed by the active and contemplative life in Late Antique thought, and shows how Bede developed the connection.

<sup>324</sup> Bede, *Epistola ad Egbertum*.

<sup>325</sup> HE iv.5: 'Chapter IV. That monks shall not wander from place to place, that is, from monastery to monastery, unless they have letters dimissory from their own abbot; but they are to remain under that obedience which they promised at the time of their profession. Chapter V. That no clergy shall leave their own bishop nor wander about at will; nor shall one be received anywhere without letters commendatory from his own bishop. If he has once been received and is unwilling to return when summoned, both the receiver and the received shall suffer excommunication'. *Quartum: Ut ipsi monachi non migrent de loco ad locum, hoc est de monasterio ad monasterium, nisi per dimissionem proprii abbatis; sed in ea permaneant oboedientia, quam tempore suae conuersionis promiserunt. Quintum: Ut nullus clericorum relinquens proprium episcopum, passim quolibet discurrat, neque alicubi ueniens absque commendaticiis litteris sui praesulis suscipiatur. Quod si semel susceptus noluerit inuitatus redire, et susceptor, et is, qui susceptus est, excommunicationi subiacebit.*

Further concerned with the intricacies of monks moving, the twenty-ninth edict of the Council of Clovesho (747) implied that when a monk moved from one community to another, he was more likely to depart again, or that he was abler to do so. The decree primarily forbade monks, nuns, and clerics from living amongst the laity. It further commented specifically upon those monks who received permission to live in another monastic house, were accepted in by their new community, but then departed from that house to live restlessly amongst the laity.<sup>326</sup> The edict invoked RB's description of the *gyrovagus* in the use of the phrase '*semper vagi et numquam stabiles*' (always moving and never *stabilis*), which is found in RB's description of the four types of monks.<sup>327</sup> The problem described by the edict is a more single-minded take on the *gyrovagi* described in RB. As noted in 1.1.1, where RM had a strong concern that *gyrovagi* were gluttons and a drain on monastic resources who did not contribute to collective life, RB had much less to say, but contained a condemnation of those who were unstable of both place and character. Here, in the twenty-ninth edict, the phrase was commandeered to comment on flighty monks, nuns, and clerics outside of the control of their superiors living amongst the laity. The flaws in their characters are expressed in the condemnation of in lay living, which was made possible by residency in, and the capacity to leave more easily, a second monastery rather than the one in which an individual initially made their vows. In this instance, the evaluation of individuals as

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<sup>326</sup> Arthur W. Haddan, William Stubbs, and David Wilkins, *Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents Relating to Great Britain and Ireland* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1869), 3:374-5. The decree states that those clerics, monks and nuns who 'having received permission and blessing, after they were peacefully admitted by others in the company of friends, but from there after a little they departed to be among the laity, they run to and fro, always moving and never *stabilis*' must return to the new community to which they were accepted. *Accepta licentia et benedictione, postea ab aliis pacifice adsumpti fuerunt in consortium familiaritatis: sed inde tamen post paululum recedentes inter laicos, huc illucque discurrunt semper vagi et numquam stabiles.*

<sup>327</sup> RB 1.11.

*numquam stabiles* is most certainly a criticism of their movement, which is further expressed as *huc illucque discurrunt* (they run to and fro).

In these canons, the issue of mobility comes down to obedience. There was evidently an ongoing problem of monks taking liberties and looking to be mobile in contravention of the will of their abbots.<sup>328</sup> Travelling in the world made living in the world, rather than separation from it by monastic regulation and community, more likely. The twenty-ninth edict responded to this issue. At no point in these passages is travel prohibited, but these canons both sought to ensure that monks kept their vows of *oboedientia* and remained someone's responsibility, particularly concerning their movement.

Additional understanding of Bede's attitude towards travel can be gained from his condemnation of travelling for the sake of it, and those who placed earthly travel ahead of doing God's work. In Genesis 8:6-7, Noah sent a raven from the ark to seek dry land; it never attempted to re-enter the ark but kept flying back and forth until the waters had receded. Bede compared this raven to 'those people who have been instructed and imbued in the divine sacraments indeed, but nevertheless not laying aside the blackness of earthly delight, love the wide journeyings of the world more

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<sup>328</sup> Some canons from councils were interpreted to argue that monks and nuns ought not to travel, but these examples do not hold the monk to the place of their original vows, only to ensure the permissions of and obedience to their abbot. The Abbess Eangyth and her daughter Haeburg (Bugga) wrote to Boniface around 719-22 asking for his advice regarding whether they should remain at home or travel to Rome, Boniface, *Epistolae*. Tangl 14; Emerton 6. They note: 'we are aware that there are many who disapprove of this ambition and disparage this form of devotion. They support their opinion by the argument that the canons of councils prescribe that everyone shall remain where he has been placed; and where he has taken his vows, there he shall fulfil them before God'. *Sed quia scimus, quod multi sunt, qui hanc voluntatem vituperant et hunc amorem derogant et eorum sententiam his adstipulantibus adfirmant, quod canones synodales precipiant, ut unusquisque in eo loco, ubi constitutus fuerit et ubi votum suum voverit, ibi maneat et ibi Deo reddat vota sua.*

than the *claustra* of the Christian way of life'.<sup>329</sup> It is here where one sees the crucial differentiation between what is acceptable as travel, and what is not. Living according to a Christian way of life, following appropriate rites, and adhering to doctrine define a good Christian lifestyle. Travel can be a part of that way of life, particularly in cases when it is directed or dictated by God, or by a superior in the hierarchy of the Church, and as long as life on the road does not distract from the rules by which a Christian must live.

Bede specifically condemned those who had received the faith and the sacraments and still did not turn away from the earthly delight found in the journeying of the world. He did not denounce travelling. He rejected placing earthly pleasure above living and acting for God. Journeying was an accepted part of life, as long as it was undertaken as a labour for God. After it had been conducted, the faithful should accept the quietness of their ordinary life. Here as in his homily, Bede set travel as contrasting to the *claustra* (enclosure) of the Christian way of life.

The boundedness of monasticism need not relate to physical enclosure. Bede's own usage of the term *claustra* is not consistent across his hagiographical writing, and so it is difficult to identify his precise meaning of the term in this context. Across his hagiographical and historical works, *claustra* is utilized in relation to the monastery, the body, and hell. Incidentally, it is not a word that features in the writings of Stephen or the anonymous authors of VCA or VCeol. The author of VCA made use of the passive participle *clausus* to describe Cuthbert's time on Farne.<sup>330</sup> In this context,

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<sup>329</sup> *InGen* Book 2 [8:7], 194: *recte comparantur hi qui sacramentis quidem celestibus institui sunt, nec tamen nigredinem terrenae oblectationis exuentes, lata potius mundi itinera quam ecclesiasticae conuersationis claustra diligunt.*

<sup>330</sup> VCA iii.5: 'before he *clausus* himself in behind closed doors', *antequam clausus obstructis ianuis intus maneret.* iv.1: 'for at that time the abovementioned king and Bishop Tumma of holy memory and

Cuthbert went beyond monastic confinement, engaging in a greater isolation. The term reflected his having shut himself away from the world metaphorically in his mind, and physically, both in a building and on an island.

In addition to the reference in *Hom.* i.13 to '*monasterii claustra*', Bede twice used the term *claustra* with reference to a monastery. One is a physical description of glazing in a monastery whilst the other refers to Cuthbert's preference for isolation on Farne. In HA 5, Bede described Biscop's obtaining of glaziers and builders from Gaul to build a Roman-style church. He comments that glaziers have 'a valuable skill not meanly fitted for *claustra* windows of churches or making vessels for various uses'.<sup>331</sup> Here in the adorning of the church, *claustra* means enclosing or covering windows. Contrastingly, in VCP 24, Bede put the word *claustra* in the mouth of Ælfflæd, abbess of Whitby, describing Cuthbert's ascetic retreat on Farne in distinction to the rank of bishop. Bede reported Ælfflæd to have said: 'you despise the glory of the world, although it is offered, and although you may attain to a bishopric, than which nothing is higher among mortal men, yet will you prefer the *claustra* of your desert place to that rank?'<sup>332</sup> This usage echoes the anonymous author's use of *clausus* and maintains literal sense of Cuthbert having shut himself away. This single usage may be the closest model for understanding the meaning that Bede implied in his Homily and commentary. However, it is problematic because it is not clear what aspect of

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chosen men of our community came to him while he was within *clausus*, bearing the decision of the council', *tunc enim supradicto rege et episcopo sanctae memoriae Tumma, et de familia nostra electissimis uiris uenientibus ad eum, intus clausum cum consilio senatus.* iv.12: 'he ordered a certain faithful well-tried brother [...] to come specially to minister to him in *clausus*', *fratrem quendam fidelem et probatum [...] specialiter ad se uenire, et ministrare intus clausus praecepit.*

<sup>331</sup> HA 5: *artificium nimirum uel lampadis ecclesiae claustris, uel uasorum multifariis usibus non ignobiliter aptum.*

<sup>332</sup> VCP 24: *tu gloriam mundi quamuis offeratur respuis, etiamsi ad episcopatum pertingere possis quo sullimius apud mortales nichil est, tui claustra deserti huic gradui praeferes?*



Cuthbert's asceticism is his *claustra*. It may be the strictures of the way of life, or the physical bounds of his island or his cell. As all aspects of his lifestyle were so closely entangled, it may well be the combined regime.

Bede twice used *claustra* to refer to the confinement of the flesh, and twice for the confinement of hell. Gregory the Great and Archbishop Theodore are both praised for passing beyond the confinement of flesh into contemplation and the spirit.<sup>333</sup> HE contains two occasions upon which the dying expressed premonitions of hell, both call upon *infernī claustra* (the confinement of hell). Bede narrated the occasion when Willibrord met an Irish scholar who was near death and knew he was destined for hell because, despite his excellent scholarship, he had given in to vices in HE iii.13.<sup>334</sup> In v.13, a Mercian man who held a similar character trait of being productive in the eyes of others but neglectful of his sinful ways internally was also near death. Spirits visited him on his deathbed. First, they outlined his lifetime of good deeds and sins, then evil spirits came and stabbed him, showing themselves to be ready to drag him to hell.<sup>335</sup> The confinement of the flesh and of hell could be simultaneously literal and figurative. They further an appreciation of the range of the word *claustra*, but do not direct its understanding.

With this evidence, it would appear that *claustra* did not refer to a single concept, even within the work of one author. Interpretations of the phrase ought to engage with some

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<sup>333</sup> HE ii.1: 'He used to think nothing but thoughts of heaven, so that, even though still imprisoned in the body, he was able to pass in contemplation beyond the *claustra* of the flesh'. *ut nulla nisi caelestia cogitare soleret, ut etiam retentus corpore ipsa iam carnis claustra contemplatione transiret.* v.8: 'September was the month, the nineteenth day, | When from the *claustra* of flesh his spirit took its way', *Namque diem nonam decimam September habebat, Cum carnis claustra spiritus egreditur.*

<sup>334</sup> HE iii.13: 'when he realized that he was near death, he trembled to think that, as soon as he was dead, he would be snatched away to the *claustra* of hell because of his sins'. *Qui cum se morti proximum uideret, timere coepit et pauere, ne mox mortuus ob merita scelerum ad inferni claustra raperetur.*

<sup>335</sup> HE v.13: 'I shall be dragged down into the *claustra* of hell'. *in inferni claustra pertrahar.*

level of the meaning of confinement or enclosure. It is not clear, however, whether that meaning is literal or figurative. Within the range of its literal meaning, it is not clear to what extent it might refer to the physical bounds of the monastery rather than the confinement of the community or the boundedness of ritual. This is problematic when attempting to come to terms with what Bede meant when he noted that ‘we who overflow with a feast of every kind of the knowledge that brings salvation might be able to live quietly within *monasterii claustra* and serve Christ with a firmly founded freedom’.<sup>336</sup> Likewise, a lack of clarity in the meaning of *claustra* obfuscates the meaning of Bede’s commentary on Genesis 8:6-7 and his critique of those who ‘love the wide journeyings of the world more than the *claustra* of the Christian way of life’.<sup>337</sup> The entangled meaning of the enclosure of the strictures of life and the physical boundedness of monasticism might be taken together in both instances, with the proviso that physical boundedness had limitations. The ‘enclosure’ of monasticism engaged with the community, rule, and the cycle of prayer, liturgy, and obedience. In these instances, therefore, while Bede did imply an element of physical boundedness, he invoked confinement from the secular through the distinctions upheld in the rhythm of monasticism as much as any physical wall.

The transformation from perceiving *stabilitas* as geographical fixity, to interpreting it as a condition of the virtuous and the eternal church forces one to re-examine monastic attitudes towards travel. This has been undertaken here for Bede as a monastic intellectual. Bede has traditionally been viewed as a static individual. However, there

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<sup>336</sup> *Hom. i.13, §13: nos omnibus scientiae salutaris dapibus abundantes intra monasterii claustra quiescere et ecum secure libertate Christo seruire queamus.*

<sup>337</sup> *InGen Book 2 [8:7], 194: lata potius mundi itinera quam ecclesiasticae conuersationis claustra diligent.*

is incidental evidence showing the importance of mobility in his life as well as that of the world around him. He clearly had some unease about travel, which is exhibited in a couple of separate ways that suggest two distinct apprehensions. First, albeit brief in content, Bede's provision of kings who travelled to Rome with motivations shows a concern with royal travel, which may reflect the broad social ramifications of their retirement. More widely, within these narratives the infrequency with which narrators included the motivations of their narrated travellers is suggestive that there was no equivalent monastic need for the justification of travel, even when narrating the absences of ecclesiastic and monastic leaders. Secondly, Bede's homily on Biscop highlighted the close balance between the necessity of movement for the governance and prestige of a monastery and Bede's fear not to encourage travel for its own sake. His intention here was to ensure that monastic learning and obedience were held in higher esteem than travel. He did not condemn travel or monastic travel itself.

### 1.3. *Peregrinatio*

Monastic travel was justified in a range of contexts under the banner of *peregrinatio*, which is not a singular concept. This chapter outlines ideas of *peregrinatio*, demonstrating its varied usage in eighth-century Anglo-Saxon texts. The connotations of the word vary by author and context and encapsulate a range of meanings. Although *peregrinatio* refers to a whole series of definitions that rely on movement, or an appreciation of it, it is not a single or concise category for considering the realities of movement, or the Anglo-Saxons abroad. This chapter interrupts the simple narrative that Anglo-Saxon *peregrinatio* was an Irish borrowing or that there is a single Insular type of *peregrinatio*. *Peregrinatio* in an Irish context has been demonstrated to be part of a widespread Christian phenomenon. The Anglo-Saxon use of the concept, while undoubtedly influenced by the Irish, is likewise a part of this broader tradition. Across different eighth-century texts, it is possible to see the practical application of a theological concept shifting as its context changed.

This chapter applies and explains *peregrinatio* in reference to instances when early medieval authors themselves use the words *peregrinus* or *peregrinatio*. Therefore, this is not a discussion of ‘pilgrimage’, but of forms of alienation. In scholarship into medieval travel, religious travellers often take centre stage.<sup>338</sup> Their travel is often referred to as ‘pilgrimage’, without consideration for the range of connotations carried

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<sup>338</sup> Reliance on religious travel is motivated by the available sources to some extent. This thesis likewise focusses on ecclesiastical and monastic travellers because of the focus of its source material. However, the objection is to a presentation of the travel of religious men as an inherently devotional act, and particularly one that invokes (whether directly or indirectly) models of pilgrimage based on modern Christian practices and applied ahistorically to the past. Such models of pilgrimage tend to assume that pilgrimage is an unchanging phenomenon. The classic creation of such a universal experience of Christian pilgrimage is by Victor W. Turner and Edith L. B. Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture: Anthropological Perspectives* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1978).

by the word. As the Middle Ages progress, *peregrinatio* comes to represent the idea of pilgrimage.<sup>339</sup> However, the present chapter does not seek to address this type of *peregrinatio*. *Peregrinatio* literally means ‘exile’ or ‘being abroad’. It carries allegorical weight corresponding to these ideas: that the Church and humanity are in exile from the heavenly homeland and on a journey towards it. In this context, *peregrinatio*, exile, or pilgrimage of the Church all refer to the same metaphorical condition. To ensure the separation of *peregrinatio* from ‘pilgrimage’, this chapter is being kept tangibly distant from those that deal with pilgrim-like travel: Long-Distance Travel, considering the narration of travel to Rome, in 2.3; and two chapters in Part 3, 3.1 and 3.2, that consider aspects of mobility at and in the narration of holy places. It is important to reiterate that, in the eighth century, the word *peregrinatio* carried connotations of exile and foreignness, and sometimes simply travel.

Emanating from, amongst others, Paul’s statement on the faith of Abraham and his descendants in Hebrews 11:13-14, *peregrinus* (foreigner) and *peregrinatio* (alienation) came to be understood as an allegory for the Church and Christians upon this earth.<sup>340</sup> *Peregrinatio*, through Augustine’s *De civitate Dei*, was linked to the theme of the two cities and meant ‘sojourning’, alienation from God’s city. This is not its sole connotation. The multiplicity of meanings applied to *peregrinus* and *peregrinatio* is not unique to the Anglo-Saxons, its semantic range has been noted in both the Jerome Vulgate and Augustine’s writings.<sup>341</sup> Across the eighth century, Anglo-Saxon authors

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<sup>339</sup> The ‘classic’ study is Gerhart B. Ladner, “Homo Viator: Mediaeval Ideas on Alienation and Order”, *Speculum* 42, no. 2 (1967): 233-59.

<sup>340</sup> Hebrews 11:13-14: ‘they confessed that they were *peregrini* and foreigners on the earth, for people who speak in this way make it clear that they are seeking a homeland’ *confitentes quia peregrini et hospites sunt supra terram qui enim haec dicunt significant se patriam inquirere*.

<sup>341</sup> M. A. Claussen, “‘Peregrinatio’ and ‘Peregrini’ in Augustine’s “City of God””, *Traditio* 46 (1991): 33-75.

referred to two types of *peregrini* living in alienation, monks and scholars living abroad within foreign monasteries, and missionaries living within communities that were made up often of many of their own countrymen, but abroad. *Peregrini* might also be strangers or travellers, perhaps of a religious resolve, experiencing hospitality within a scriptural and monastic rhetorical framework. The *peregrinatio* itself may be literal or figurative; it might indicate travel or its results. Each meaning of *peregrinatio* and *peregrinus* reflect types of movement and these concepts contribute to a rhetoric of mobility. Travel unifies the diverse meanings of *peregrinatio*.

### 1.3.1. Ideas of *Peregrinatio*

Augustine's use of the term is often the starting point for discussions on *peregrinatio*. Manuela Brito-Martins outlines Augustine's idea of *peregrinatio* as that of a journey that defines humanity's life as distinct from God.<sup>342</sup> Augustine's *De civitate Dei* is the defining writing through which *peregrinatio* developed the meaning of allegorical journey from the allegorical condition. His particular focus was on the metaphorical, spiritual journey that will end with a union between heavenly and earthly cities of Jerusalem.<sup>343</sup> In his usage, *peregrinatio*'s primary meaning, 'a form of exile', was developed by its Greek equivalent's association of both 'coming from abroad' and 'spiritual journey'.<sup>344</sup> M. A. Claussen argued that one of the characteristics of the Augustinian *peregrinatio* is that it sought a particular goal, albeit one that was outside

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<sup>342</sup> Manuela Brito-Martins, "The Concept of *Peregrinatio* in Saint Augustine and Its Influences", in *Exile in the Middle Ages*, ed. Laura Napran and Elisabeth van Houts, International Medieval Research (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), 83-94, at 94.

<sup>343</sup> For a discussion of Augustine's range of usage of *peregrinatio* and an explanation of Augustine's role as the author who gave *peregrinatio* as a metaphor for the human condition its full theological working, see Claussen, "'Peregrinatio' and 'Peregrini'". A scriptural use of *peregrinatio* that revolves around wandering, 'sojourning', and being a stranger lay behind Augustine's use of *peregrinatio*, although it did not direct his interpretation.

<sup>344</sup> Brito-Martins, "Concept of *Peregrinatio*", 83-4.

of the self, and outside of time.<sup>345</sup> Gillian Clark, too, outlined the multiplicity of meaning carried by *peregrinatio* during Augustine's lifetime, and in his usage. For her, the most important element of *peregrinatio* was non-belonging; despite co-existence and shared customs on earth, the Christian *peregrinus* knew he was living away from home.<sup>346</sup> For Augustine, being a *peregrinus* was an essential characteristic of being a Christian, and this was both legal and metaphorical.<sup>347</sup>

For the seventh- and eighth-century Anglo-Saxons, Irish concepts of *peregrinatio* form the primary context. Outside of scholarship into medieval Ireland, the Irish practice of *peregrinatio* is often introduced as a distinctly Irish innovation.<sup>348</sup> Recent Irish scholarship has discussed *peregrinatio* in its theological, historical, and literary contexts. By contrast, in an Anglo-Saxon context, *peregrinatio* and exile have been discussed primarily as an allegorical theme in Christian poetry, or as a political phenomenon.<sup>349</sup> This has allowed a seemingly distinct Irish tradition to emerge, as comparisons cannot be easily drawn between the Irish exemplars and their contemporaries in the Anglo-Saxon world. Juliet Mullin's recent examination of the concepts of the 'desert in the sea', framed by *peregrinatio*, is a case in point. She

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<sup>345</sup> Claussen, "'Peregrinatio' and 'Peregrini'", 44.

<sup>346</sup> Gillian Clark, "Pilgrims and Foreigners: Augustine on Travelling Home", in *Travel, Communication, and Geography in Late Antiquity: Sacred and Profane*, ed. Linda Ellis and Frank Kidner (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 149-58, at 156.

<sup>347</sup> Claussen, "'Peregrinatio' and 'Peregrini'", 47-50.

<sup>348</sup> For example, Dietz, *Wandering Monks*, 195-6, creates a vast distinction between Irish and Mediterranean *peregrinatio*. Implied outlines of Irish exceptionalism might also be understood from Palmer, *Frankish World*, 61 and the statement that 'with the growth of Christianity in Ireland a corresponding ascetic ideal developed where people voluntarily left their homeland and kin in order to live a purer life'. This implies a spontaneity to Irish *peregrinatio*; Palmer expresses these ideas solely in the context of scriptural expressions of alienation. He further goes on to compare Anglo-Saxon missionaries to a singular Irish *peregrinatio* ideal.

<sup>349</sup> Hugh Magennis, *The Cambridge Introduction to Anglo-Saxon Literature*, Cambridge Introductions to Literature (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 159-62. For example, Stanley B. Greenfield and George Hardin Brown, *Hero and Exile: The Art of Old English Poetry* (London: Hambledon Press, 1989). Contains five essays on the theme of exile in different poems.

outlined an Irish-style *peregrinatio* that was focussed upon the search for desert-like spaces and emphasized the absence of equivalent ‘deserts’ in the Anglo-Saxon hagiographical tradition. Thus, she found no Anglo-Saxon engagement with *peregrinatio* in hagiography, only in poetry.<sup>350</sup> Problematically, she only looked at one type of Irish *peregrinatio*, that of monastic voyaging, and she did not engage with recent perspectives on that particular type of *peregrinatio*. The labels ‘Irish-style *peregrinatio*’ or ‘Irish-style pilgrimage’ have tended to be applied uncritically to explain various behaviours or literary phenomena without the need to consider the religious, social, or political implications of the behaviour. This has also created a distinction between supposed Irish and English traditions, leading to questions like ‘why did X, a prominent anti-Irish churchman, engage with an Irish practice’, and discouraged engagement with the universal western Church’s ideas on *peregrinatio* on both the Irish and Anglo-Saxon side.<sup>351</sup>

Although traditionally dominated by the idea that *peregrinatio* was an evangelistic movement in the Celtic Church, Irish *peregrinatio* was primarily a type of monastic self-exile.<sup>352</sup> Ritual *peregrinatio* was a monk’s abandonment of society that might take multiple forms.<sup>353</sup> In broad terms, it takes a transformation of the anchorites’ desert into the sea and the pursuit of isolation away from the stain of secular life as its starting

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<sup>350</sup> Mullins, “*Herimum in Mari*”.

<sup>351</sup> For example, James Palmer considers Anglo-Saxon missionaries and Irish *peregrinatio* tradition in the same breath, Palmer, *Frankish World*, 63-72. He questions the Irish influence on various missionaries. He is looking for the direct influence of Irish ideas, and creating a dichotomy between Wilfrid and the Irish on the idea of *peregrinatio*. It is clear from a range of eighth-century authors’ texts, not least Bede, both in his scriptural and hagiographical work, that concepts of *peregrinatio* are present in a range of Anglo-Saxon rhetoric, and that a range of practices are understood and expressed by this one term.

<sup>352</sup> Jonathan M. Wooding, “Historical-Theological Models of Pilgrimage as a Resource for Faith Tourism”, *Journal of Tourism Consumption and Practice* 5, no. 2 (2013): 61-72, at 62.

<sup>353</sup> Alexander O’Hara, “*Patria, Peregrinatio, and Paenitentia*: Identities of Alienation in the Seventh Century”, in *Post-Roman Transitions: Christian and Barbarian Identities in the Early Medieval West*, ed. Walter Pohl and Gerda Heydemann (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 89-124.



point. Despite being a continuing practice, monastic voyages of *peregrinatio*, to find empty places, to establish ‘remote’ monasteries, and to be away from one’s homeland, were mythologized by the turn of the eighth century.<sup>354</sup> Irish literary production, both in Latin and in the vernacular, engaged with these individuals, and in writing about journeying engaged with spiritual journeys too.<sup>355</sup> The monastic voyagers who sought this wilderness and eventually settled the Atlantic islands combined ideals of martyrdom that engaged with ideas of renunciation of kin and the exile of the Desert Fathers.<sup>356</sup> The second broad category of Irish *peregrinatio* is the monastic and clerical impulse to live in alienation, choosing life as a literal foreigner in Britain or on the Continent. The most famous example of this type of *peregrinus* is Columbanus, although many followed in his footsteps.<sup>357</sup> These types of *peregrinatio* were interconnected, they both play with ideas of homelessness and separation from the familiar as a means of reaching the heavenly *patria*. In Ireland across the sixth through eighth centuries, *peregrinatio* meant more than casting off into the ocean.

Kathleen Hughes’s seminal 1960 article ‘The Changing Theory and Practice of Irish Pilgrimage’ broached the connection between the reality of *peregrinatio* and the associated literary culture.<sup>358</sup> She outlined the chronological changes of the concept of *peregrinatio* within the context of her model of the development of the early Irish

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<sup>354</sup> Jonathan M. Wooding, “Monastic Voyaging and the Nauigatio”, in *The Otherworld Voyage in Early Irish Literature: An Anthology of Criticism*, ed. Jonathan M. Wooding (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000), 226-45, at 231.

<sup>355</sup> “‘Peregrini’ in the Ocean: Spirituality and Reality”, in *Clerics, Kings and Vikings: Essays on Medieval Ireland in Honour of Donnchadh Ó Corráin*, ed. Emer Purcell, et al. (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2015), 411-17.

<sup>356</sup> “Monastic Voyaging”, 230-31; “‘Peregrini’”, 413-4.

<sup>357</sup> O’Hara, “Identities of Alienation”; Elva Johnston, *Literacy and Identity in Early Medieval Ireland*, Studies in Celtic History (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2013), 44-9; “Exiles from the Edge? The Irish Contexts of *Peregrinatio*”, in *The Irish in Early Medieval Europe: Identity, Culture and Religion*, ed. Roy Flechner and Sven Meeder (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 38-52.

<sup>358</sup> Kathleen Hughes, “The Changing Theory and Practice of Irish Pilgrimage”, *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 11, no. 02 (1960): 143-51.

church. Both the model and the chronology have been overturned, but the connection between the literary genre and the monastic voyager has been retained. Jonathan Wooding rejects Hughes's distinct periodization in which there was a time of voyaging followed by a period of literary and spiritual introspection.<sup>359</sup> He argues convincingly that the period of voyaging and literary production within the voyaging-genre overlap. Voyaging began in the sixth century and continued beyond the eighth-century production of the first wave of Hiberno-Latin voyaging texts.

Certain problematic ideas circulate within scholarship on the Irish corpus of material on *peregrinatio*. These influence expectations of other examples of *peregrinatio*. One particular issue is that of the wandering or aimless nature of the religious exercise. All examples of *peregrini* for whom details are known, both historical and literary, set out on their exiles with intentions of where they were aiming for, although that place may be a non-specific location such as 'paradise' or a 'desert' in the sea.<sup>360</sup> In this journeying, the destination may be less important than the spiritual journey and the process of being on *peregrinatio*. However, there is no sense in referring to the practice as aimless. The earliest reference to wandering as an aspect of Irish *peregrinatio* is in Hughes's 'Changing Theory and Practice'.<sup>361</sup> The reputation and importance of both Hughes's work in general and this paper in particular have ensured that the idea of wandering and aimless Irish *peregrinatio* infused later discussion. Hughes never discussed the wandering aspect of *peregrinatio* or explained its conception. It was merely a facet of Irish *peregrini* behaviour as far as she was concerned. She went so

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<sup>359</sup> Wooding, "'Peregrini'".

<sup>360</sup> For example, Cormac, in Adomnán's *Vita Columbae* spent three voyages looking for a desert in the ocean, in i.6; ii.42; and iii.17.

<sup>361</sup> Hughes, "Changing Theory".

far as to call the Irish *peregrinus* a ‘gyrovagus’, adopting Benedictine language that condemned the disorganized, selfish wanderer and reframing it as a critique of the *peregrinus*.<sup>362</sup>

An assumption of aimlessness can be explained further by the conflation of exile as punishment, penitential exile, and devotional *peregrinatio*. Thomas Charles-Edwards produced the most thorough explanation of the legal meaning and purpose of exile. He contextualized both the secular legal meanings of exile and its Christian legal development.<sup>363</sup> In secular legal contexts, some severe crimes, kin slaying in particular, resulted in being cast into the sea without oars and left to the mercy of the elements.<sup>364</sup> The legal punishment involved a casting out where the individual was stripped of agency. As a result, the exile was aimless upon the sea. In a Christian context, Charles-Edwards identified an association between excommunication and exile. Excommunication initially entailed the exclusion of an individual from Christian society. Following the Christianization of Ireland, it naturally came to imply the exclusion of the individual from all society, that is, his kingdom, and thus exile. Therefore, he argued that in the final stages of the conversion of Ireland this association stimulated penitential exile. In such a scenario where excommunication might be the punishment, Charles-Edwards proposed that by the end of the sixth century, suitable penance might be exile.<sup>365</sup>

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<sup>362</sup> Ibid., 149.

<sup>363</sup> Thomas M. Charles-Edwards, “The Social Background to Irish *Peregrinatio*”, in *The Otherworld Voyage in Early Irish Literature: An Anthology of Criticism*, ed. Jonathan M. Wooding (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000), 94-108.

<sup>364</sup> Ibid., 98-100.

<sup>365</sup> Ibid., 105-6. Excommunication may be temporary and so therefore penitential exile could be too.

This legal context highlights a particularly Irish development of exile as penance. However, it is also important to consider the universal side of spiritual exile. Jonathan Wooding highlights that in conjunction with the penitential exile, Irish ideas and practices of monastic *peregrinatio* developed both from scriptural renunciation of kin and in imitation of the eremitical self-exile of the Desert Fathers.<sup>366</sup> He sees the Irish desire for self-exile in the context of its Mediterranean equivalents.<sup>367</sup> Inherited philosophies connect the Irish tradition of *peregrinatio* to universal Christian ideas. Recent research into Irish *peregrinatio* has tended to highlight the flexibility of the *peregrinatio* movement, highlighting two distinct types of *peregrini* the monastic voyager who sought his desert in the ocean, who lived on the fringes of the Irish world, and the monk who sought alienation living in Britain or on the Continent.<sup>368</sup>

### 1.3.2. Bede's *Peregrinatio*

Across his commentaries, Bede used *peregrinus* in two primary contexts. One refers to a type of traveller to be offered hospitality, and the other is the Christian condition of alienation or perpetual exile. Across the Bedan corpus, *peregrinus* is not limited to these two meanings; Bede used the term in a range of miscellaneous ways that engaged with the simple meaning 'foreigner' or 'stranger'.<sup>369</sup> *Peregrinatio*, by contrast, is used in exegetical material to refer to the Church's and Christians' condition of exile and alienation. Despite the eschatological overtones of the allegory of alienation, it is interesting to note that the terms *peregrinus* and *peregrinatio* are used only once each

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<sup>366</sup> Wooding, "Monastic Voyaging", 230.

<sup>367</sup> Wooding, "Historical-Theological Models", 63.

<sup>368</sup> Wooding, "Historical-Theological Models"; "Peregrini"; Johnston, "Exiles from the Edge?".

<sup>369</sup> For example, in *InGen* Book 4, 19 [19:4-5], 300, Bede wrote that the Sodomites were shameless to the extent that 'they did not try to hide their crimes even from strangers and *peregrini*' *ne hospitibus quidem ac peregrinis sua scelera abscondere*. Or in DLS 3.2, 11 on Akeldama and the place where Judas was hanged, Bede wrote that 'some corpses of *peregrini* and paupers are buried even today' *peregrinos et ignobiles mortuos hodie quoque alios terra tegit*. And in *Epistula ad Egbertum*, §15, Bede wrote of the absence of religion amongst the laity as though it were foreign *quasi prope peregrinum*.

within *ExApoc*.<sup>370</sup> The figurative alienation of the Church and her subjects is not a feature of Bede's historical and hagiographical writing. There, he primarily used *peregrinatio* as self-exile, living abroad for God.

Bede's attitude towards *peregrinatio* has been used as a comparison for Irish *peregrinatio*. Charles-Edwards used Bede's testimony as the benchmark for an English concept of *peregrinatio* in a brief comparison to the Irish concept.<sup>371</sup> Thus, he saw various distinctions between English and Irish *peregrinatio* that are authorially specific, as will be shown in the remainder of this chapter. Based on some of Charles-Edwards's outline of Bede and English *peregrinatio*, Elva Johnston proposed that Bede's *peregrinatio* was primarily an expression of missionary activity, both on the Continent and in Ireland.<sup>372</sup> This, she noted, was a major distinction between Anglo-Saxon and Irish *peregrinatio*. She also highlighted the Anglo-Saxon affirmation of ethnic community through this missionary activity as a point of divergence between the English and Irish models of *peregrinatio*, in which social and material ties were cut in a search for God.<sup>373</sup> This latter point is agreed upon; the Anglo-Saxon missionaries remained in contact with their kin-groups and friends in England, while the Irish are noted to have cut contact. However, the former has little basis in Bede's writing and perhaps is a better description of the eighth-century Anglo-Saxon missionaries' position. The missionary Anglo-Saxons, in their letters and hagiographies, referred to their activities as *peregrinatio* and engaged in their work

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<sup>370</sup> *ExApoc* Book 2, 19 [12:6], 192: 'the Church, living in hope of eternal things, rejoices in her *peregrinatio* through this present desert' *ecclesia sub spe uiuens aeternorum peregrinatione praesentis heremi gaudet*; and Book 2, 20 [12:10], 195: 'the angels rejoice in the salvation of their brethren, that is, of those who will be citizens in the future, though now they are *peregrini*'. *Congrulantur angeli saluti fratrum suorum, id est ciuium futurorum, nunc autem peregrinorum* after Primasius.

<sup>371</sup> Charles-Edwards, "Social Background", 96-7.

<sup>372</sup> Johnston, *Literacy and Identity*, 44-5; she reiterates this in "Exiles from the Edge?", 40.

<sup>373</sup> Johnston, *Literacy and Identity*, 45.

from within kinship groups. Although Bede referred to missionaries-in-training in Ireland as *peregrini*, he did not refer to their time as missionaries using the language of *peregrinatio* within his HE. Missionary activity was not the primary action to which Bede referred as *peregrinatio*.

Exile and alienation provide a key metaphor for the present Church. It emphasizes that the Christian, throughout their life, is on a trajectory towards heaven. Bede expressed it like this: ‘the Lord drove the human race far and wide out into the *peregrinatio* of exile, casting them out from the *stabilis* dwelling of the heavenly fatherland’.<sup>374</sup> It would be excessive to list Bede’s every use of *peregrinus* and *peregrinatio* that engaged with the meaning of alienation. They are found in commentaries from the full spread of Bede’s career and five individual homilies from the 50 in total use it, mostly in passing, suggesting its accessibility and readily grasped meaning.<sup>375</sup> Bede saw that, in baptism, Christians ‘promised that [they] should be as *peregrini* and wayfarers in this world but citizens of that other life which [they] hope for from the Lord’.<sup>376</sup> This figurative depiction of this life as a time of exile draws on the model created by Augustine, but at no point did Bede explain the allegory in his writings.

The allegory was widely referenced and understood, or at least widely taught. A single reference to the human condition of *peregrinatio* in this world appears at the end of the text of HE, in the letter to Nechtan, king of the Picts. This letter is a theological treatise so its presence here is no different from its presence in other explicitly theological texts; however, it is addressed to a secular figure. The text of the letter

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<sup>374</sup> *Hom. i.4: dominus genus humanum a stabili habitatione patriae caelestis eiciens in huius peregrinationem exilii longe late que dispulit.*

<sup>375</sup> This life as the *peregrinatio* of exile and alienation is invoked in *Hom. i.4; ii.7; ii.16; ii.21; ii.25.*

<sup>376</sup> *InEz Book 1 [3:4], 47: peregrinos nos in hoc mundo ac uiatores alterius autem uitae quam a domino speraremus ciues esse promissimus.*

comments ‘how much more should the citizens of our heavenly home, who are now on *peregrinatio* in this world’, strive to obey God’s commands.<sup>377</sup> A later interaction between a king and a monastic intellectual further suggests the inclusion of the allegory of exile in elite secular education. The allegory is found in two of Alcuin’s letters to Charlemagne. First, and briefly, in a letter seeking forgiveness from the king, Alcuin states that he is a ‘poor man and *peregrinus* in this world’.<sup>378</sup> More substantially, Alcuin wrote words of comfort to Charlemagne on the death of two of his nobles. Alcuin expressed their lives in devotional terms that highlight that the allegory of life as *peregrinatio* was understood by Charlemagne, and could be used to console him. ‘Truly, it does not have to inspire our mourning, when our dear ones please to leave from this *peregrinatio*, they go on to the homeland, from dying to living, from exile to the kingdom’.<sup>379</sup> The evidence of kings being addressed with this allegory shows that the metaphor was accessible to the secular elite. Either kings were expected to know the allegory, or it was considered appropriate to be explained to them when the letters were read.

*Peregrinus* literally means ‘stranger’ or ‘foreigner’. In Bede’s, and his contemporaries’, writing, it most commonly carried this meaning in the context of outlining the almsgiving of various individuals. Bede utilized it in HE iii.6, and a description of King Oswald: ‘he was always wonderfully humble, kind, and generous to the poor and to *peregrini*’.<sup>380</sup> Stephen, in praising the works of mercy and alms with

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<sup>377</sup> HE, v.21: *quanto magis ciuibus patriae caelestis in hoc mundo peregrinantibus optandum est.*

<sup>378</sup> Alcuin, *Epistolae*. Dümmler 249: *pauper et peregrinus in hoc seculo.*

<sup>379</sup> Alcuin, *Epistolae*. Dümmler 198: *non enim nobis luctum incutere debet, cum quis libet carus noster a peregrinatione pergit ad patriam, a morientibus ad viventes, ab exilio ad regnum.*

<sup>380</sup> HE iii.6: *quod mirum dictu est, pauperibus et peregrinis semper humilis, benignus, et largus fuit.*

which Wilfrid engaged and following the example of the anonymous author of VCA, listed that Wilfrid:

Practised humility and that charity which is greater than all gifts and without which every other virtue is nothing worth. He cared for the poor, fed the hungry, clothed the naked, took in *peregrini*, redeemed captives and protected widows and orphans, that he might merit the reward of eternal life amid the choirs of angels in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>381</sup>

This same list outlines Cuthbert's positive qualities in VCA iv.1.<sup>382</sup> Both Cuthbert and Wilfrid were described as *peregrinos suscipiens* (taking in *peregrini*) amongst their various almsgivings. This is a version of what developed into the corporal works of mercy, the virtuous almsgiving carried out to alleviate others' bodily misfortune that goes together with a series of spiritual works of mercy. The divine command is expressed in Matthew 25:35–46. The direction and instruction to undertake corporal works was not limited to the example of saints in hagiography. Bede noted that the reader of Genesis should be instructed by the example of Abraham in Genesis 18, who upon seeing three men 'immediately ran to meet them as if he was going to offer the grace of hospitality to *peregrinus*'.<sup>383</sup> Directly engaging with the corporal works of mercy in *InEz* Bede outlined good works, noting that every day Christians should carry out 'the duty of the day'.<sup>384</sup> These 'duties' are the good works or corporal works: 'ministering bread to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, clothing to the cold, hospitality

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<sup>381</sup> VW 11: *curam pauperum gerens, esurientes pascens, nudos vestiens, peregrinos suscipiens, captivos redimens, viduas ac pupillos tuens, ut mercedem vitae aeternae inter choro angelorum cum Domino nostro Iesu Christo accipere mereatur.*

<sup>382</sup> VCA iv.1: *Curam pauperum gerens, esurientes pascens, nudos uestiens, peregrinos suscipiens, captiuos redimens, uiduas et pupillos tuens, ut mercedem uitae aeternae inter choro angelorum cum Domino nostro Iesu Christo accipere mereatur.* This is the only use of *peregrinus/peregrinatio* found within VCA.

<sup>383</sup> *InGen* Book 4 [18:1], 288: *statim cucurrit in occursum eorum quasi peregrinis hospitalitatis gratiam praebiturus.*

<sup>384</sup> *InEz* Book 1 [3:4], 48: *opus diei.*



to the *peregrini*, care to the sick, burial to the dead, doctrine to the erring, and comfort to the mournful'.<sup>385</sup>

The reception of guests also found its way into monastic discourse through monastic regulations, such as RB.<sup>386</sup> It should be noted that the Vulgate, and RB echoing it, used *hospes* to express 'guest' or 'stranger' where both VW and VCA used *peregrinus*. In RB, however, the term *peregrinus* for one undertaking some form of devotional travel is a particular grouping within the many *hospites* (strangers or guests) that a monastery might receive. RB 53:1-2 demonstrates this; it states: 'all *hospites* who present themselves are to be welcomed as Christ, [...] especially those who share our faith and *peregrini*'.<sup>387</sup> The chapter then goes on to primarily talk about *hospites*, but *peregrini* are singled out a second time in 53:15: 'great care and concern are to be shown in receiving poor people and *peregrini*, because in them more particularly is Christ received'.<sup>388</sup> A clear distinction between *hospites* in general and *peregrini* specifically is reiterated on all five occasions that the term *peregrinus* is used. RB 61, on receiving *monachis peregrinis*, typically translated as 'visiting monks', is perhaps the key to explaining this distinction. The *monachus peregrinus* is initially received as *hospes* from *longinquus provincia* (a distant region). If he and the monastery are compatible, then he may stay as long as he likes and reaffirm his monastic vows in this new setting. If he is not fitting, he may be expelled. There also is a reference to the role of monastic

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<sup>385</sup> InEz Book 1 [3:4], 48: *est esurienti panem potum sitiendi algenti uestem hospitium peregrino infirmo uisitationem sepulturam mortuo erranti doctrinam dolenti solatium ministrare.*

<sup>386</sup> RB 53. Elsewhere, for example, RM 65, 71, 72, and 79, all engage in this dialogue.

<sup>387</sup> RB 53:1-2: *omnes supervenientes hospites tamquam Christus suscipiantur [...] maxime domesticis fidei et peregrinis.*

<sup>388</sup> RB 53:15: *pauperum et peregrinorum maxime susceptioni cura sollicite exhibeatur, quia in ipsis magis Christus suscipitur.* RB, 56.1: 'the abbot's table must always be with *hospites* and *peregrini*'. *mensa abbatis cum hospitibus et peregrinis sit semper*, similarly differentiates between the two categories.

obedience in governing monastic movement: the *monachus peregrinus* must be able to prove with letters of commendation that his former abbot permitted him to enter another community. This describes receiving monks who sought to spend a period of alienation in a foreign monastery. There is a suggestion, too, in this distinct protocol that there was an expectation that both monastic and non-monastic *peregrini* would pass through monasteries during their devotional travel.

RB made the connection between the poor and *peregrini*, noting that ‘great care and concern are to be shown in receiving poor people and *peregrini*, because in them more particularly is Christ received’.<sup>389</sup> Bede too made that special connection between the poor and *peregrini* singling them out for collective charity because they are more strongly received as Christ. In his homily on Matthew 28:16-20, in which the Great Commission is given, Bede reflected upon the times when Christ appeared to his apostles after his resurrection, one of which was the occasion of Christ revealing himself by breaking bread. Here Bede tied together Christ, who appeared as a stranger to his disciples, and Christ being made present to those who ‘willingly bestow whatever goods [they] can on *peregrini* and poor people’.<sup>390</sup> This association between the poor and the *peregrini* is recurrent. In RB, where the distinction between *hospes* and *peregrini* can be seen, it is clear that it was devotional travellers who were privileged and in whom Christ was received. However, for Bede, it is not clear whether the *peregrini* deserving of charity and hospitality were explicitly religious travellers, seekers of alienation, or more generally strangers and foreigners.

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<sup>389</sup> RB 53:15: *pauperum et peregrinorum maxime susceptioni cura sollicite exhibeatur, quia in ipsis magis Christus suscipitur.*

<sup>390</sup> *Hom. ii.8: cum peregrinis et pauperibus quaecumque possumus bona libenter inpendimus.*

### 1.3.2a. *Peregrini* in Hagiography

The characteristics of *peregrinatio* in Bede's hagiographical usage were varied, but it is possible to identify a central semantic strand referring to a period spent abroad in a formal religious, usually monastic, context. He mostly used the term in ecclesiastical contexts. It was not characterized by wandering, but by being abroad. Bede called Fursa, an Irish ascetic who spearheaded a mission to East Anglia, and the English abroad *peregrini*. Moreover, in all cases of alienation, it was the condition of being abroad that was important, not the movement that was undertaken to get there. Across HE Books 3 and 4, self-exile, alienation for God, is outlined for seven Anglo-Saxons. These individuals entered monasteries, undertook education, lived as hermits, and embarked on missionary work abroad.

Bede's one example of a secular individual narrated as engaged with the concept of *peregrinatio* came from his narrative of the retirement of the Wessex kings Cædwalla and Ine to Rome in HE v.7. Ine was described as longing for his time on earth *peregrinari* (to be spent in *peregrinatio*) in Rome.<sup>391</sup> Bede invoked his desire to be near holy places. The motivation for this time spent near holy sites is similar to that of the churchmen who went into self-imposed exile, rather than those who travelled to Rome.<sup>392</sup> Bede noted that Ine went 'so that he might be thought worthy to receive a greater welcome from the saints in heaven'.<sup>393</sup> The language is in keeping with self-exile. If Bede's use of the term here paralleled his use of it in ecclesiastical contexts, then Ine might be understood to have entered a structured religious environment in

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<sup>391</sup> HE v.7: *cupiens in uicinia sanctorum locorum ad tempus peregrinari in terris*. Problematically translated by Colgrave as 'to spend some of his time on earth as a pilgrim in the neighbourhood of the holy places'.

<sup>392</sup> Narrated motivations for journeys to Rome were discussed above in Chapter 1.2.

<sup>393</sup> HE v.7: *quo familiarius a sanctis recipi mereretur in caelis*.

Rome upon his retirement. This was the explicitly narrated fate of Cenred of Mercia and Offa of the East Saxons, who received tonsure in Rome.<sup>394</sup> Little is said of Ine's fate compared to that of the other kings in Book 5 who went to Rome. Perhaps Bede himself knew little of what became of him. Alternatively, the use of the term *peregrinari* in this context implied that Ine entered a monastery or some form of formal religious life.

Egbert is Bede's central *peregrinus*. He is key to Bede's narrative as the man who converted Iona to Roman Christianity, and thus the apex of the Anglo-Saxon progression to being a mature Christian nation.<sup>395</sup> Bede labelled him a *peregrinus* on three occasions. In addition, Bede noted that 'he also made a vow that he would live as a *peregrinus* and never return to his native island, Britain'.<sup>396</sup> Although presented here as a part of living as a *peregrinus*, it will be shown that Egbert's vow not to go back to his native land went beyond Bede's idea of the principal activity of a *peregrinus*. Here, Bede differentiated from the traditional view of Irish *peregrinatio*, which tends to be assumed a permanent state.<sup>397</sup> Bede used the phrase *peregrinus pro Domino* (a *peregrinus* for the Lord) to describe Egbert's devotional self-exile in HE iv.3.<sup>398</sup> Bede mentioned Egbert's self-exile on a third occasion, and this time, Bede

<sup>394</sup> HE v.19. All four kings are discussed in the context of resigning their kingship for 'religious life' by Stancliffe, "Kings".

<sup>395</sup> Discussed for example by Higham, *(Re-)Reading Bede*, 181-4.

<sup>396</sup> HE iii.27: *uouit etiam uotum, quia adeo peregrinus uiuere uellet, ut numquam in insulam, in qua natus est, id est Britanniam, rediret.*

<sup>397</sup> Ideas of permanent exile stem from individuals like Columbanus and Columba who refused to return home. Columbanus's *potioris peregrinationis*, a top tier of *peregrinatio* with a commitment to perpetual exile, is understood to be a type of martyrdom (white martyrdom). Discussed by Charles-Edwards, "Social Background". For a discussion of Columbanus in a broader seventh-century context, see also O'Hara, "Identities of Alienation". For Irish types of martyrdom, see Clare Stancliffe, "Red, White and Blue Martyrdom", in *Ireland in Early Medieval Europe*, ed. Dorothy Whitelock, Rosamond McKitterick, and David N. Dumville (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 21-46.

<sup>398</sup> HE iv.3: 'but while Chad returned to his native land, Egbert remained there until the end of his life, a *peregrinus* for the Lord's sake'. *Sed illo postmodum patriam reuerso, ipse peregrinus pro Domino usque ad finem uitae permansit.*

noted that Egbert ‘was living a *vita peregrina* in Ireland [...] so that he might reach his heavenly fatherland’.<sup>399</sup> Bede used phrase *vita peregrina* to invoke the practice of *peregrinatio* in relation to other *peregrini*.

Bede often presented the motivations for living in alienation along with the phrase *vita peregrina*, as is the case for Willibrord, Fursa, and Hild of Whitby. Willibrord was ‘living a *vita peregrina* in Ireland out of love for his eternal fatherland’ before heading to Frisia to make his mark as a missionary.<sup>400</sup> Bede described his activities in Ireland as a priest, but not his later career spent in Frisia, as a *peregrinatio*. This description shows that Acca, Bede’s source of information on this matter, and Bede himself, saw this distinction. As with Willibrord, Fursa wanted to lead a life of self-exile, which Bede expressed in HE iii.19: ‘he was anxious to live the *vita peregrina* for the Lord’s sake, wherever opportunity offered’.<sup>401</sup> Bede noted that Hild, too, wanted ‘to live *peregrina vita* for the Lord’s sake’, although she did not achieve that aim.<sup>402</sup> After a year spent waiting in East Anglia, she was called back to Northumbria to serve as abbess at a monastery on the Wear. Hild desired to live in *peregrinatio* ‘so that she might the more easily attain to her eternal home in heaven’.<sup>403</sup> Bede included her amongst his limited selection of *peregrini*, the implication of which is that Hild’s desire and intention for *peregrinatio*, and contemplation of *peregrinatio*, may have been of as much value as undertaking it.

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<sup>399</sup> HE v.9: *in Hibernia insula peregrinam ducere uitam pro adipiscenda in caelis patria retulimus.*

<sup>400</sup> HE iii.13: *in Hibernia [...] peregrinam pro aeterna patria duceret uitam.*

<sup>401</sup> HE iii.19: *ubicumque sibi oportunitatem inueniret, peregrinam ducere uitam.* For Hild, Colgrave translated *peregrina vita* as ‘live as a stranger’ where for Willibrord and Fursa he chose ‘pilgrim’s life’.

<sup>402</sup> HE iv.23(21): *peregrinam pro Domino uitam ducere.*

<sup>403</sup> HE iv.23(21): *quo facilius perpetuam in caelis patriam posset mereri.*

In HE iii.8, Bede noted the fate of many Anglo-Saxon women who headed to the Continent to live in monasteries amongst the Franks because of a lack of English monasteries. Amongst them, Bede named two as having been made abbesses at Brie, Sæthryth and Æthelburh, stepdaughter and daughter of Anna, king of East Anglia. Bede said that this was because of their virtuous merit, as they were *peregrinae* (foreigners). However, if his usage of the term was consistent, their status ought to have been raised by their rejection of their homeland. He made claims of modesty for them by accentuating their virtues. In this way, Bede praised them for qualities outside of their *peregrinatio*, which is consistent with his treatment of *peregrini* across HE. Bede was keen to outline the spiritual benefits and good character of his *peregrini*. Those who were discussed in terms of their desire to live a *vita peregrina* are noted to have done so for the love of God and heaven.

Although Egbert's *peregrinatio* led to his missionary activity, Bede did not join the two up in HE. Religious and theological thought motivated Egbert's desire to live in self-imposed exile. Bede praised Egbert for his humility and other godly qualities, and the vow he made not to return.<sup>404</sup> In HE v.9, in addition to praising Egbert, Bede also praised Wihthberht, a hermit and *peregrinus*. Following a period of eremitical life, he travelled to Frisia to preach as a missionary, but he was not successful and returned to his exile and hermitage. Bede labelled Wihthberht during his initial time in Ireland as a *peregrinus* and commented on the perfection of his hermitage during that period.<sup>405</sup> Following the failure of his mission, Bede stated that Wihthberht

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<sup>404</sup> HE iii.27.

<sup>405</sup> HE v.9: 'he had spent many years as a *peregrinus* in Ireland, living as a hermit in great perfection of life' *nam multos annos in Hibernia peregrinus anchoreticam in magna perfectione uitam egerat*.

Returned to his beloved *locus peregrinationis* and began again to give himself up to the Lord, in his accustomed life of silence; and although he failed to help strangers to the faith, yet he took care to help his own people more, by the example of his virtues.<sup>406</sup>

Wihthberht is the only *peregrinus* whom Bede also called a hermit. He took care to express twice over how great and virtuous a hermit Wihthberht was. Bede worked hard to justify the benefits of being a hermit as an equally godly activity to missionary work. Across the board, Bede carefully expressed the lives and activities of his *peregrini* in terms that highlighted their work for God, and the labours of a life of alienation.

In general, Bede did not describe missionary work and attempted missionary work as *peregrinatio* within HE. This was the case for Willibrord, Egbert, and the would-be missionary Wihthberht. Although in his earlier *Chronica maiora*, contained within DTR, Bede described both Willibrord and Egbert as *peregrini* for the eternal homeland. In both cases, Bede mentioned their missionary successes, gaining for the Church in the case of Willibrord and converting the provinces of the Irish to the canonical Easter, alongside the label *peregrinus*.<sup>407</sup> In *Chronica maiora*, Bede made it clear that being abroad was what made Willibrord a *peregrinus*.<sup>408</sup> However, Bede's emphasis appears to have settled more firmly on this characteristic in his later HE.

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<sup>406</sup> HE v.9: *reuersus ad dilectae locum peregrinationis, solito in silentio uacare Domino coepit; et quoniam externis prodesse ad fidem non poterat, suis amplius ex uirtutum exemplis prodesse curabat.*

<sup>407</sup> *Chronica Majora* is DTR 66. For Willibrord, s.a. 4649: 'Even now, as a *peregrinus* for the eternal homeland (for he is one of the people of the English from Britain) he achieves there every day innumerable daily losses for the devil and gains for the Christian faith' *in qua usque hodie pro aeterna patria peregrinus (est enim de brittania gentis anglorum) innumera cottidie diabolo detrimenta et christianae fidei facit augmenta*; for Egbert, s.a. 4670: 'Egbert, a holy man of the English people and priest in monastic life, training himself for the celestial homeland as a *peregrinus*, converted through his pious preaching many provinces of the Irish to the canonical observance of the timing of Easter, from which they had long strayed'. *Ecberectus, uir sanctus de gente anglorum et sacerdotium monachica uita, etiam pro caelesti patria peregrinus exornans, plurimas scotticae gentis prouincias ad canonicam paschalis temporis obseruantiam, a qua diutius aberrauerant, pia praedicatione conuertit.*

<sup>408</sup> DTR 66, s.a. 4649: Bede noted that Willibrord was bishop of the Frisians, and a *peregrinus* 'for he is one of the people of the English from Britain' *est enim de brittania gentis anglorum.*

In HE, Bede presented a clear distinction between missionaries, and the time abroad that made them *peregrini*. Despite that, there is one instance of Bede calling missionaries *peregrini*. In HE v.10, Bede narrated the two Hewalds who went to Old Saxony as missionaries. Villagers, who understood that they were trying to introduce a new religion and change their way of life, martyred them. Bede stated ‘when the viceroy whom they wished to see heard of it, he was extremely angry that the *peregrini* had not been permitted to see him as they wished’.<sup>409</sup> The Hewalds had lived in self-exile in Ireland before their missionary work, much as Willibrord, Egbert and Wihtberht had done, but Bede changed his emphasis regarding the assignation of the term *peregrini*. Bede called the Hewalds, who were martyred in the course of their missionary work, *peregrini* at this point. It is possible that he used the term with its simple meaning of ‘foreigners’ in association with the hospitality that they were refused. Perhaps, however, he thought that by gaining martyrdom they became worthy of such a categorization or emphasis. Additionally, Bede described their activities, along only with Egbert’s, as *exulo* (being in exile) a term that he applied more commonly to political exile.<sup>410</sup> Perhaps this double emphasis of language use reflected upon the strength of their exile, for Egbert bolstered by his vow not to return to his *patria* and for the Hewalds and their martyrdom at the hands of pagans.

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<sup>409</sup> HE v.10: *quod cum satrapa ille, quem uidere uolebant, audisset, iratus est ualde, quod ad se uenire uolentes peregrini non permetterentur.*

<sup>410</sup> For the Hewalds, see HE v.10: ‘following their example (i.e. that of Willibrord, Wihtberht and Egbert), two English priests who had long lived in exile in Ireland for the sake of their eternal fatherland, came to the kingdom of the Old Saxons’, *horum secuti exempla duo quidam presbyteri de natione Anglorum, qui in Hibernia multo tempore pro aeterna patria exulauerant, uenerunt ad prouinciam Antiquorum Saxonum.* For Egbert, see HE iii.27: ‘he brought much blessing both to his own race and to those among whom he lived in exile, the Irish and the Picts’, *unde et genti suae et illis, in quibus exulabat, nationibus Scottorum siue Pictorum.*



Bede used *peregrinatio* sparingly in HA and the descriptions of Biscop. There are only three uses of the semantic group in HA, two concern Biscop and the third is in the letter written by Hwaetberht, abbot of Wearmouth and Jarrow after Ceolfrith, to Pope Gregory II.<sup>411</sup> Christopher Grocock and Ian Wood note that Bede used the word *peregrinatio* ‘very specifically to mean a journey overseas, with no intention of returning’.<sup>412</sup> However, the above discussion has shown that this is not the case. Bede’s use of *peregrinatio* indicates being abroad, not the journey. The intention not to return was supplementary to *peregrinatio* itself, or at least to its description, as those who were ascribed this objective are limited. The two uses of *peregrinatio* in Biscop’s narrative reflect the self-inflicted foreignness of *peregrinatio*. First, in HA 3, the Pope ‘ordered [Biscop] to abandon the *peregrinatio*, which he had undertaken for Christ and return to his homeland’.<sup>413</sup> This command to return came at the end of Biscop’s combined second and third journeys to Rome, between which he lived at the island monastery of Lérins. During this period, he had been living in alienation in much the same way as those Northumbrians who undertook a period of *peregrinatio* at an Irish monastery. Despite not using it about any other individual journey, Bede put the word *peregrinatio* into Biscop’s mouth in describing his travels towards the end of his life. Biscop is reported to have said: ‘I have taught you all the best things I have found from seventeen monasteries during the long absences of my frequent *peregrinationes*’.<sup>414</sup> Again, this connects the idea of *peregrinatio* with time spent in foreign monasteries,

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<sup>411</sup> HA 19 and VCeol 31: Hwaetberht wrote that Ceolfrith ‘has once again begun *peregrinari* for Christ’ *rursus incipit peregrinari pro Christo*.

<sup>412</sup> Grocock and Wood, *Abbots*, 29, n.31.

<sup>413</sup> HA 3: *praecepitque ut relicta peregrinatione quam pro Christo suscepit commodi altioris intuitu patriam reuersus*.

<sup>414</sup> HA 11: *ex decem quippe et septem monasteriis quae inter longos meae crebre peregrinationis discursus optima comperi*.

illustrating a crucial aspect of Bede's understanding of the concept. In his Homily on Biscop, Bede used the term *peregrinatio* in the same two contexts: to describe his extended time abroad before being instructed to guide Abbot Hadrian and Archbishop Theodore to Canterbury, and in reflecting upon *regulae* that he had learned in monasteries on his travels.<sup>415</sup>

It is possible to see a distinct use of the terms *peregrinatio* and *peregrinus* in material derived from Nothhelm's testimony found in HE.<sup>416</sup> This material originated in Rome via Canterbury. It reflects either Nothhelm's usage of the language or that of the earlier papal records. Two chapters in Book 1 demonstrate this. In HE i.23, outlining the journey of Augustine of Canterbury, missionary from Gregory the Great, to Britain. There were setbacks, and Augustine and his companions experienced doubt. The companions sent Augustine back, and he 'was to beg St. Gregory humbly for permission to give up so dangerous, wearisome, and uncertain a *peregrinatio*'.<sup>417</sup> Here *peregrinatio* is a synonym for *iter*. Certainly, Augustine and his companions are not engaged in self-exile as they were commanded to go. At most, *peregrinatio* here might suggest religious connotations for the journey, or indicate its foreignness. In the passage in which this phrase is contained, a whole range of language of movement is in use: *redire* (to go or to return) is used alongside *remittunt* (they sent back). Perhaps

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<sup>415</sup> *Hom.* i.13, §7: 'he hastened to set out on his journey to Rome, [...] and was to have passed the whole span of his life there too had not the apostolic authority of the lord pope prevented him and instructed him to return to his homeland, in order to escort to Britain Archbishop Theodore of holy recollection'. *Romam peregrinaturus aduolauit [...] ibidem totum uitae suae tempus erat exacturus, si non apostolica domni papae prohiberet auctoritas qui eum propter ducendum Brittanniam sanctae recordationis archiepiscopum Theodorum patriam redire praecepit.* And §8: 'putting forward most sure and certain statutes from long-established monasteries which he had learned while on his travels, to be observed both by himself and his followers'. *antiquorum statuta certissima monasteriorum quae in peregrinatione didicerat sibi suisque obseruanda proponens.*

<sup>416</sup> Nothhelm was an important source for Bede's HE, he obtained letters from the papacy in Rome and brought information from Abbot Albinus in Canterbury to Bede in Jarrow.

<sup>417</sup> HE i.23: *qui a beato Gregorio humili supplicatu obtineret, ne tam periculosam, tam laboriosam, tam incertam peregrinationem adire deberent.*

*peregrinatio* reflects on the significance of the journey to Britain. However, it appears as one travel-word amongst many. Either way, it seems to refer to the act of travelling rather than being abroad, and this is distinct in Bede's use of the term. At the conclusion of this journey, HE i.25 narrated Augustine's first meeting with the Kentish king, Æthelberht. Æthelberht was given a speech including the phrase '*uerum quia de longe huc peregrini uenistis*', awkwardly translated by Bertram Colgrave as 'but as you have come on a long pilgrimage'. Perhaps it should read 'but as you have come from far to this place as *peregrini*'.<sup>418</sup> *Peregrini* here likely reflects the legal sense of the word, highlighting the perils that Augustine and his companions faced as foreigners to the land in which they wished to preach. These usages, which can be identified as originating from the writing of people other than Bede, are distinct from Bede's typical usage. There is not any spiritual meaning to the choice of these words, religiously motivated self-exile is not expressed, and these examples are at odds with the rest of Bede's usage of the term.

The only other use of the term *peregrinus* in a context deriving directly from Canterbury comes in the canons from the Council of Hertford. In HE iv.5, Bede included the text of the synod, written by Theodore, archbishop of Canterbury. Three of the canons relate to the restriction of movement. Of these, Canon VI expresses 'that episcopal and clerical *peregrini* shall be content with the hospitality afforded them'.<sup>419</sup> The use of *peregrini* in the context of hospitality would appear to refer to the scriptural and monastic obligation to provide hospitality for *peregrini*. Precisely who clerical *peregrini* were is difficult to ascertain, however, it seems implausible that this canon

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<sup>418</sup> Colgrave's translation ignores both the *de* 'from', and the *huc* 'here/to this place'.

<sup>419</sup> HE iv.5: *ut episcopi atque clerici peregrini contenti sint hospitalitatis munere oblate*.

refers specifically to those seeking alienation. The second half of the canon notes that clerical *peregrini* ought not to perform priestly duties without the permission of the bishop in whose diocese they are situated. At most, therefore, *peregrini* in this context might indicate clerics abroad in the sense of outside of their home diocese, but it may simply refer to those clerics who were on the road.

### 1.3.2b. Wilfrid the *Peregrinus*

There is further evidence of different authorial voices in the context of the use and meaning of *peregrinatio* in the contrast between Bede and Stephen. In his summary of VW, HE v.19, Bede used the term *peregrinus* twice to describe Wilfrid when he was abroad on his first journey to Rome. Both times, although not as clear cut as some examples, Bede's language was in keeping with his use of *peregrinus* elsewhere in HE. Stephen's use of *peregrinus*, however, is situated within a distinct context.

Bede used *peregrinus* in association with Wilfrid's religiously motivated first journey to Rome, not his later politically driven trips. However, Bede did not describe Wilfrid's time abroad as a *peregrinatio*, and there is no theologically derived discussion or interpretation of it. On his first journey to Rome, Wilfrid stayed in Lyon with Bishop Aunemundus, called 'Dalfinus' by Stephen and Bede. When 'Dalfinus' offered Wilfrid a wife and secular rule, Bede noted that 'Wilfrid thanked ['Dalfinus'] for the kindness he had deigned to show him, a *peregrinus*, but answered that he had resolved upon another course of life and for that reason had left his native land and set out for Rome'.<sup>420</sup> Here, *peregrinus* is likely to carry the meaning of 'foreigner' or 'stranger'.

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<sup>420</sup> HE v.19: *at ille gratias agens pietati, quam erga eum, cum esset peregrinus, habere dignaretur, respondit propositum se magis alterius conuersationis habere, atque ideo, patria relictā, Romam iter agere coepisse.*

‘Dalfinus’s’ hospitality towards Wilfrid is being praised in terms that invoke hospitality as a corporal work of mercy, engaging with the scriptural ideal.<sup>421</sup>

Later, on his first return from Rome, Wilfrid wanted to die as a martyr with ‘Dalfinus’ in Lyon. ‘But when the executioners discovered that he was a *peregrinus* and of the English race, they spared him and refused to put him to death with his bishop’.<sup>422</sup> If *peregrinus* in this context reflects Wilfrid as a legal foreigner, then it was redundant for Bede to stipulate further that Wilfrid was *oriundum de natione Anglorum* (born of the English nation). However, if Bede meant that Wilfrid was a devotional exile, it is not clear how this would have impacted upon a decision made by his would-be executioner. It may reflect that Wilfrid was a guest of the Bishop and not a member of his household. Alternatively, it may be that Bede invoked *peregrinatio* because of its importance to his presentation of the young Wilfrid rather than a contemporary importance of being a *peregrinus* when facing potential martyrdom. William Trent Foley demonstrated that across this episode, Stephen worked to make Wilfrid a confessor, and it may be that Bede’s use of *peregrinus* here sought to transform one type of saintly behaviour into another, that of white martyrdom.<sup>423</sup> Bede’s Wilfrid the *peregrinus* was a religious traveller, if not a seeker of alienation, and he was a stranger abroad seeking hospitality.

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<sup>421</sup> Of further note here, Wilfrid was narrated to have rejected worldly possessions at this point (Bede follows Stephen, VW 4). He explicitly denied himself a wife and earthly rule, the implication surely being that by doing so he would gain through God in heavenly family and authority. Compare this rejection of earthly family and wealth to Bede’s statement in *Hom.* i.13, discussed above in Chapter 1.2, that Biscop left the wife that he did not have to join the Church. There, as here, the rejection of worldly possessions is a symbolic step towards monasticism. This closeness of statements regarding Wilfrid and Biscop, and the justification of their journeys and their work is remarkable.

<sup>422</sup> HE v.19: *sed hunc ubi peregrinum atque oriundum de natione Anglorum cognouere carnifices, pepercere illi, neque eum trucidare cum suo uoluere pontifice.*

<sup>423</sup> Foley, *Images of Sanctity*; for types of martyrdom, see Stancliffe, “Martyrdom”.

Stephen's language in both of these situations was different from Bede's; he did not call Wilfrid a *peregrinus*. In rewriting the outline of Wilfrid's life, Bede chose the noun *peregrinus* in both of these contexts. Stephen used alternative phrasing in their parallels in VW. In the context of how 'Dalfinus' received Wilfrid, Stephen commented that he did so 'with generous hospitality',<sup>424</sup> and that 'he provided them bountifully with all the necessities of life as if they were his own kinsmen'.<sup>425</sup> Concerning his almost-martyrdom, the executioners were told that Wilfrid was '*transmarinus de Anglorum gente ex Britannia*'.<sup>426</sup> This is a literal description: Wilfrid was from overseas, of the English people from Britain. VW contains the echo of both the call to receive strangers as if they were Christ using *peregrinus* and *peregrinatio* in alienation, but Stephen used this in the context of Wilfrid's later political exile. Bede, in shifting his use of *peregrinus* to Wilfrid's first journey included Wilfrid within his small group of *peregrini* but did not present Wilfrid's periods of political exile as cognate with a spiritual exile. In both of these interactions in 'Dalfinus's' court Wilfrid might be understood to have been a *peregrinus*, living abroad for God. For Bede, the choice to apply this term, particularly given the singularity of its meaning in other contexts, probably reflects an interpretation of Wilfrid's life that saw his earliest time abroad as a *peregrinatio*, albeit one that was cut short at the time when he was denied martyrdom.<sup>427</sup>

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<sup>424</sup> VW 4: *hospitio suscepit*.

<sup>425</sup> VW 4: *ideoque omnia illis necessaria quasi proprii sui essent, abundare fecit*.

<sup>426</sup> VW 6: 'a foreigner of the English race from Britain'.

<sup>427</sup> Is it too much to see a parallel with Biscop's *peregrinatio* being cut short by a papal instruction to return to Britain, as expressed by Bede in HA 3? The two first English churchmen in Rome, as far as the narratives are concerned, began their *peregrinatio* together, sought to stay abroad in different circumstances, and were both forced to return to Britain where they became politically and religiously important. Bede then dealt ambiguously with them concerning their time abroad as *peregrini*.

Stephen used *peregrinatio* for Wilfrid's first journey to Rome, although he did so in different contexts to Bede. In discussing Wilfrid's motivations for going to Rome the first time, after outlining Wilfrid's aim to cleanse himself of sin by visiting the see of Peter, Stephen stated 'so the servant of God set out on *peregrinatio* with the blessing of his kinsfolk'.<sup>428</sup> Stephen's use of the term *peregrinatio* here appears to refer to devotional travel. In contrast to Bede's usage of *peregrinatio*, it is worth noting the connotations of movement, not just being abroad in this statement. Stephen used *peregrinatio* on two further occasions in contexts meaning '(devotional) travel', so it is likely that for him that the primary meaning of *ad peregrinationem* here was 'to go on religious travels'.

James Palmer proposes that Stephen sought to frame Wilfrid's political exiles within a 'Benedictine' framework through his use of the language of *peregrinatio*. This invoked the appropriateness of the receipt of guests and framed certain travellers as "'good" wanderers'.<sup>429</sup> He proposes that this was important because, as Wilfrid was a champion of RB in England, his followers would have been troubled by his time in exile as in opposition to monastic *stabilitas*. However, as Chapter 1.1 has shown, *stabilitas* was not a feature of RB that bounded monks to place, instead stability was a virtuous character trait, and fixity was grounded in obedience. That said, Stephen did make the hospitality provided to Wilfrid a central focus of his travels, and particularly used the language of *peregrinatio* in relation to the hospitality that Wilfrid received while he was a political exile. Stephen used *peregrinus* within a framework that engaged with the idea that Christ was most found in the hospitality given to *peregrini*.

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<sup>428</sup> VW 3: *pergens igitur servus Dei cum benedictione parentum suorum ad peregrinationem*.

<sup>429</sup> James T. Palmer, "Wilfrid and the Frisians", in *Wilfrid, Abbot, Bishop, Saint: Papers from the 1300th Anniversary Conferences*, ed. Nicholas J. Higham (Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2013), 231-42, at 235.

However, Stephen, like Bede, did not engage with a ‘Benedictine’ *peregrinus* as a particular type of *hospes*. Thus, Stephen’s Wilfrid as a *peregrinus* was a stranger, or perhaps a (devotional) traveller, in whom Christ was more especially received. Through this, Stephen name-checked a framework of monastic travelling, but it is not likely that this was to persuade those fixed on fixity. His intention was to praise those who provided the hospitality, and to show where Wilfrid’s detractors were in the wrong for casting him out: in rejecting him, they rejected Christ.<sup>430</sup>

Stephen used *peregrinus* and *peregrinatio* to express ‘stranger’, or perhaps ‘(devotional) traveller’, and ‘(devotional) travel abroad’. In VW 28, when Wilfrid and his companions were in exile, Stephen noted that Perctarit, king of Campania, ‘received the *peregrini* kindly according to the bidding of the Lord’.<sup>431</sup> Later in the same chapter, Stephen boasted on Wilfrid’s behalf that ‘the Lord glorified him by His protecting care throughout his *peregrinatio*’.<sup>432</sup> Stephen made these statements regarding Wilfrid’s second journey to Rome, where his motivation for travelling was to seek an end to his persecution, rather than spiritual gain. In Chapter 40, Stephen again used *peregrinatio* to refer to Wilfrid’s movement. Berhtwald, nephew of Æthelræd, King of the Mercians offered hospitality when he met with Wilfrid and his companions and ‘heard the reason of their *peregrinatio*’.<sup>433</sup> At this time, Wilfrid was

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<sup>430</sup> It may be that the intention was to look to the scriptural antecedent of the good works in RB. Following Matthew 25, when Christ comes to separate his people from those who will receive eternal punishment, it is through good works, amongst them hospitality, that they will be judged. Those who failed to give alms to the hungry, thirsty, strangers, and sick failed to give alms to Christ and will be directed to their eternal doom. Thus, those who shunned Wilfrid the *peregrinus* shunned Christ, and are amongst the damned.

<sup>431</sup> VW 28: *peregrinos secundum praeceptum Domini benigne suscipiens*.

<sup>432</sup> VW 28: *eum Dominus ubique in peregrinatione protegens magnificavit*.

<sup>433</sup> VW 40: ‘so Wilfrid the bishop, the beloved of God, set out with his companions, and, leaving his fatherland, he sought the southern kingdoms as an exile. But the Lord, who is with His saints when they are tried, sent a man of noble race and kind heart to meet him, a reeve called Berhtwald, nephew of Aethilred, King of the Mercians. As soon as he saw such honourable men and heard the reason of their *peregrinatio*, as our holy teacher described them, he begged them, in the name of the Lord, to stay with



a political exile again, deprived of his see and seeking welcome in foreign Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. Once again, this image of Wilfrid the *peregrinus* engaged with his receipt of hospitality.

In contrast to Bede's Anglo-Saxon *peregrini* who were static once they travelled to a foreign land, Wilfrid's political exile saw him moving frequently from kingdom to kingdom seeking refuge. This context of political exile perhaps explains the absence of spiritual exile from Stephen's discourse on Wilfrid.

Stephen used *peregrinatio* alongside exile and alienation on one occasion. He wrote a speech that Wilfrid proclaimed to influence a bishop whom he met on the road. This unnamed bishop spoke against Wilfrid with the intention of reducing him to servitude, because he had previously supported Dagobert of Austrasia during his political exile. Wilfrid's speech integrated ideas of allegorical and political exile with the plight of the Israelites. Wilfrid said 'that in accordance with the command of God to the people of Israel which dwelt a stranger in a strange land, I helped and nourished [Dagobert] living as an exile and in *peregrinatio* and I raised him up for your good and not for your harm'.<sup>434</sup> Whilst this speech is presented directly in defence of Dagobert, through it Stephen also gave Wilfrid and his followers a framework through which to defend his exile. A frequent theme of VW is that of political exile and right or godly behaviour towards an exile. The other bishop criticized Wilfrid for helping Dagobert from his

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him, and with all earnestness he requested the servants of God to dwell in some part of his estate'. *Proficiscente ergo Deo amabili Wilfritho episcopo cum suis sodalibus, patria rura deserens, australia regna in exilio quaerens, Dominus, qui sanctis suis in temptationibus adest, praefectum virum nobili genere et nomine Bergtwald, filium fratris Aethelredi regis Merciorum, mitissimo animo in obviam emisit, et statim ut vidit tam honorabiles homines et causas peregrinationis, sancto doctore nostro revelante, audivit, adiurans in nomine Domini manere secum et partem territorii sui ad habitandum in eo servos Dei cum omni diligentia poposcit.*

<sup>434</sup> VW 33: *quod talem virum exulantem et in peregrinatione degentem secundum praeceptum Dei populo Israhelitico, qui accola fuit in terra aliena, auxiliatus enutrivi et exaltavi in bonum et non in malum vestrum.*

exile and restoring him to his kingship. Wilfrid's reply expressed support for Dagobert. Dagobert's actions were invoked as following God's command to the Israelites; Wilfrid highlighted the Israelites' own position as like that of Dagobert, they 'dwelt as strangers in a strange land'.<sup>435</sup> He therefore strongly invoked a sense of *peregrinatio* as alienation, although both Dagobert and Wilfrid were political exiles, not in religiously motivated self-exile.

The reframing of exile in this way built a case for supporting Wilfrid, and Dagobert, presenting them as Israelites, rather than seekers of alienation they became God's persecuted people. The description of Dagobert and his political exile could just as easily be a description of Wilfrid. The exile that both men faced invoked the Israelites' persecution in alienation. Stephen placed this statement in Wilfrid's mouth to strengthen the argument that he was following God's command in helping Dagobert. Dagobert the exile is a parallel for Wilfrid the exile, and Stephen made a claim in support of Wilfrid's defenders too. Outside of this dialogue, Stephen did not push into theological rhetoric concerning alienation. However, his gesture to it here suggests that it could be utilized in this manner, and was an accessible means of argument. Despite, or because of, Wilfrid's political exile, Stephen kept his distance from rhetoric concerning exile and sojourning towards the heavenly homeland.

### 1.3.3. Expanding *Peregrinatio*

The range of meanings contained in *peregrinatio* extends beyond that use which Stephen and Bede made of it. Within a missionary epistolary context, allegorical *peregrinatio* gained personal meaning as a way of understanding and expressing the struggles of being away from one's *patria* and giving it a theological framework.

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<sup>435</sup> VW 33: *qui accola fuit in terra aliena*.

However, the allegorical *peregrinatio*, so effectively used in the letters of missionaries, is absent from missionary hagiographies, in which the language of *peregrinatio* is used sparingly to refer to the initial going abroad of the saint or the sum total of their life spent abroad. Boniface and his correspondents used *peregrinatio* primarily to express the lifestyle of those Anglo-Saxons who lived abroad both in missionary contexts and in Rome. Contrastingly, Alcuin's mostly employed the allegory of *peregrinatio* and exile in his letters, although he used this both directly and in relation to time spent living abroad.

Boniface made use of *peregrinatio* as living abroad. He noted in a letter to Bugga, an abbess based in Kent, that if worldliness interfered with her quiet mind, she 'should obtain freedom of contemplation by means of a *peregrinatio*, if [she] so desire and are able, as our sister Wiethburga did'.<sup>436</sup> This is further clarified by an explanation that Wiethburga was now serving the shrine of St Peter in Rome and that, when the threats of the Saracens receded, Bugga's best option would be to join her. Wiethburga's *peregrinatio* was a literal life of alienation in Rome at St Peter's. Demonstrating a similar use of *peregrinatio*, earlier Bugga, along with her mother the Abbess Eangyth, had written to Boniface in around 719-722 noting that many of their kinsmen 'have left their native shores entrusting themselves to the pathways of the sea and have sought the shrines of the Apostles Peter and Paul'.<sup>437</sup> Eangyth and Bugga also wished to leave their *patria*. They desired both to visit Boniface in the land and *peregrinatio* in which he was engaged, and to visit Rome.<sup>438</sup> They trusted that God's will would be

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<sup>436</sup> Boniface, *Epistolae*. Tangl 27; Emerton 19: *per peregrinationem libertatem contemplationis, si volueris et possis, adquiras; quemadmodum soror nostra Uuiethburga faciebat.*

<sup>437</sup> Boniface, *Epistolae*. Tangl 14; Emerton 6: *patria litora reliquerunt et equoreis campis se crediderunt et sanctorum petivere apostolorum limina Petri et Pauli.*

<sup>438</sup> Boniface, *Epistolae*. Tangl 14; Emerton 6. They write first, 'we may be able to journey into those lands and upon that *peregrinatio* in which you are engaged and, if we were permitted, to hear the living

apparent in Boniface's advice to them as to 'whether to live on in [their] native land or go forth upon [their] *peregrinatio*'.<sup>439</sup> In a further demonstration of their use of the term *peregrinatio*, they made a petition for the reception of a friend. They requested that if he travelled to the land in which Boniface lived, that he be sent to another priest on *peregrinatio* known to them.<sup>440</sup> A range of existences spent amongst foreign people in literal alienation was *peregrinatio*.

Boniface, likewise, described his own time abroad as a *peregrinatio*. There was only one occasion when he did not use the term in this context. Instead, he used *peregrinatio* in its Late Antique context, referring to literal exile, stating that 'they say that under Christian emperors, such a marriage was punishable by death or by perpetual *peregrinatio*'.<sup>441</sup> Outside of this single instance, Boniface's use of *peregrinatio* referenced his alienation and living abroad, or that of those with whom he associated. This can be in the form of a simple statement such as in a letter to Nothhelm, in which he expressed a unity between Nothhelm and himself, and '[his] brethren and companions in [his] *peregrinatio*'.<sup>442</sup> By way of an apology for the lack of

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words from your lips' *in illas terras et in illam peregrinationem possumus pervenire, ubi habitas; et si licuisset nobis viva verba ex ore tuo audire*. But they are not worthy to do this, instead writing that 'we have long wished to go to Rome, once mistress of the world, as many of our friends, both relatives and strangers, have done. We would there seek pardon for our sins as many others have done and are still doing' *sicut plurimi ex necessariis nostris et cognatis sive alienis dominam quondam orbis Romam peteremus et ibi peccatorum nostrorum veniam impetremus, sicut alii multi fecerunt et adhuc faciunt*.

<sup>439</sup> Boniface, *Epistolae*. Tangl 14; Emerton 6: *sive in patrio solo vivere vel in peregrinatione exulare*.

<sup>440</sup> Boniface, *Epistolae*. Tangl 14; Emerton 6: 'if it should please God to direct [Denewald's] steps into those parts of the earth and that *peregrinatio* in which you are engaged, we beg you to receive him with kindness and, if he shall so request, that you will send him on with your blessing and a favorable recommendation to the venerable brother, priest, and confessor Berhthere, who has long been occupied in *peregrinatio*'. *Si Deus disponat vel de creverit, ut dirigat viam eius in illas partes terre et peregrinationem illam, in qua habitas, tu illum cum caritate et dilectione suscipias et, si voluntas eius vel desiderium flagitat, cum tua benedictione et gratia et eulogia dirigere digneris ad venerabilem fratrem nomine Berhtheri presbiteratus gratia decoratum et confessionis titulo notatum, qui diu in coluit illam peregrinationem*.

<sup>441</sup> Boniface, *Epistolae*. Tangl 33; Emerton 24: *adfirmant regnantibus christianis imperatoribus illius matrimonii scelus capitali sententia multandum vel peregrinatione perpetua delendum*.

<sup>442</sup> Boniface, *Epistolae*. Tangl 33; Emerton 24: *fraternis comitibus peregrinationis*.

communication, he united the common aims of himself and Bugga, through the juxtaposition of their physical separation: ‘after we have been separated through the awe of Christ, love of long *peregrinatio*, and the wide space of land and sea’.<sup>443</sup> The theme of distant friends and close enemies drove the exclamation in a letter to Cardinal-Deacon Gemmulus that he was ‘the comforter of [Boniface’s] *peregrinatio*’.<sup>444</sup>

Boniface also mixed his real *peregrinatio* with figurative expressions of this life as the *instabilis* sea, emphasizing that *peregrinatio* was not just being abroad, but invoked ideas of the *peregrinatio* of this life.

From the depth of my heart I beg your gracious love to bear me in mind in your holy prayers and I urge you to implore for me our merciful God, who is the author of our *peregrinatio*, that He will hold our frail vessel in His guiding and protecting hand, preserve it from the waves of the German tempests, and bring it safely to the peaceful shore of the heavenly Jerusalem.<sup>445</sup>

The bringing together of the allegory of *peregrinatio* towards that homeland with that of the sea, which is turbulent in contrast to the *stabilitas* of the heavenly homeland, illustrates two of the key allegories that this thesis places within this eighth-century milieu of writing about travel and its figurative context.<sup>446</sup> Boniface used the pair of allegories again on a second occasion, this time explicitly expressing the problems that

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<sup>443</sup> Boniface, *Epistolae*. Tangl 94: *postquam nos timor Christi et amor peregrinationis longa et lata terrarum ac maris intercapidine separavit.*

<sup>444</sup> Boniface, *Epistolae*. Tangl 104; Emerton 84: *peregrinationis huius consolatorem prope habeam.*

<sup>445</sup> Boniface, *Epistolae*. Tangl 38; Emerton 29: *caritatis vestrae clementiam medullatis et intimis precor diorum obsecramus precibus, ut in vestris sacrosanctis orationibus intercedendo nostri memores esse dignemini et almitatis vestrae precibus inploretis, ut pius Dominus, qui causa est peregrinationis nostrae, navem fragilitatis nostrae, ne fluctibus Germtioicarum tempestatum submergatur, dextera sua protegente et gubernante inlesam custodiendo ad caelestis Hieru salem litus tranquillum perducatur.*

<sup>446</sup> The allegory of the sea, which has been alluded to previously in 1.1.2, is the focus of discussion in Chapter 2.1.

he and his mission faced both from the pagans and from the treachery of false brethren. He proclaimed that ‘the way of our *peregrinatio* is beset by tempests of many kinds’.<sup>447</sup>

Lul, Boniface’s successor, only used the term *peregrinatio* in three letters within the corpus. On all three occasions, he used the same formulaic construction: he requested copies of the writings of Aldhelm or Bede as a source of comfort in his *peregrinatio*.<sup>448</sup>

Boniface had made use of a similar phrase: writing to Bishop Daniel of Winchester to request a book he said ‘there is one solace in my *peregrinatio*’,<sup>449</sup> and to Hwaetberht of Wearmouth and Jarrow, he requested a cloak ‘which would be a great comfort in our *peregrinatio*’.<sup>450</sup>

Boniface’s use of the language of *peregrinatio* within his letters is distinct from that of Alcuin. Alcuin’s letters show that, in dialogue with other religious figures, he engaged with the allegory of alienation. For example, in *Epistola* 79 to Abbess Ædilhthya he stated ‘we are *hospites* and *peregrini* on this earth, our homeland is in heaven’,<sup>451</sup> echoing Paul in Hebrews 11:13.<sup>452</sup> Similarly, in *Epistola* 105 to Abbot Edilthud, he stated ‘truly we are *exules* and *peregrini* in this life’.<sup>453</sup> In the course of his letter record, Alcuin expressed his life as an act of *peregrinatio* on occasion.<sup>454</sup> He

<sup>447</sup> Boniface, *Epistolae*. Tangl 65; Emerton 53: *conversatio peregrinationis nostrae variis tempestatibus inluditur*.

<sup>448</sup> Boniface, *Epistolae*. Tangl 71, to his *magister* Dealwin, Lul wrote requesting any works of Aldhelm ‘to comfort me in my *peregrinatio*’, *ad consolationem peregrinationis meae*. Tangl 125 to ‘Koaena’ requesting specific commentaries of Bede’s ‘to comfort us in our *peregrinatio*’, *ad consolationem peregrinationis nostrae*. And finally, Tangl 126 to Abbot Cuthbert of Wearmouth and Jarrow requesting more of Bede’s works, Lul protests that he would like them ‘not only for comfort in our *peregrinatio*, but also in our weakness’, *ad consolationem non solum peregrinationis, sed etiam infirmitatis nostrae*.

<sup>449</sup> Boniface, *Epistolae*. Tangl 63; Emerton 51: *uno solacio peregrinationis mee*.

<sup>450</sup> Boniface, *Epistolae*. Tangl 76; Emerton 60: *grande solacium peregrinationis nostrae transmittitis*.

<sup>451</sup> Alcuin, *Epistolae*. Dümmler 79: *hospites et peregrini sumus in hac terra; patria nostra in caelo est*.

<sup>452</sup> Hebrews 11:13: ‘they confessed that they were *peregrini* and *hospites* on the earth’, *confitentes quia peregrini et hospites sunt supra terram*.

<sup>453</sup> Alcuin, *Epistolae*. Dümmler 105: *exules enim et peregrini sumus in hac vita*.

<sup>454</sup> For example, in Alcuin, *Epistolae*. Dümmler 9: ‘Even in the lingering of my *peregrinatio*, my affection for my brother or sister of the flesh has not wearied’. *Nec me, etiam in peregrinatione morantem, tantum fratris vel sororis carnalis affectus taedit*. Dümmler 114: ‘whether those who are

used the terminology in this way predominantly in dialogue with other ecclesiastical figures.

Alcuin explicitly connected *peregrinatio* and exile in the text of a letter that he wrote to Arno, archbishop of Salzburg, in which he commented, ‘may the *peregrinatio* of this exile be endured patiently’.<sup>455</sup> In further letters to Arno, Alcuin expressed more devotional ideals associated with his self-exile; he stated ‘may my heart be cleansed presently in this *peregrinatio*, so that I might be allowed to enjoy that most blessed vision in the homeland’.<sup>456</sup> In these instances, *peregrinatio* holds a double meaning, that of the allegory of life as alienation, and of Alcuin’s alienation through his life abroad on the Continent. For Alcuin, once he left England, the living of his life was doubly a *peregrinatio* in exile from both his heavenly and earthly *patria*. Alcuin drew on the metaphor more freely and frequently than Bede did. Similar to Bede, his understanding of *peregrinatio* was one of self-imposed exile that may have been temporary or for life, undertaken by *peregrini*, individuals who had already made (for the most part) a religious commitment to the priesthood or a monastery. The duration of a *peregrinatio* was not spent travelling or wandering for its own sake, but at established ecclesiastical institutions where the individual might better themselves by education, or others by example or evangelism. The travel itself seems not to feature in the praise or description of these people; it is their foreign existence, their being in exile, which was important.

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with me in my *peregrinatio*, or those who live with you in their homeland’, *sive qui tecum sunt in peregrinatione, sive qui tecum versari videntur in patria*.

<sup>455</sup> Alcuin, *Epistolae*. Dümmler 59: *huius exilii peregrinatio patienter feratur*.

<sup>456</sup> Alcuin, *Epistolae*. Dümmler 156: *mundetur modo cor in hac peregrinatione, ut in patria illius beatissimae visionis frui liceat*.

Alcuin also used *peregrini* to describe travellers to Rome, who were to engage in devotional activity there. In *Epistola* 11, a letter of introduction to Angilbert, Alcuin wrote on behalf of the letter bearer:

Graciously receive the bearer of these letters and beg our lord King Pepin to help him along the way of his *peregrinatio*. Kings are rewarded, in truth, for helping the poor, and especially *peregrini* who seek the holy threshold of St. Peter, prince of the apostles.<sup>457</sup>

Alcuin invoked the corporal works of mercy, echoing that connection between the poor and *peregrini* again. Although used directly alongside hospitality, the *peregrinus* here was singled out for particular attention because he was on the way to Rome, marking a distinction from the earlier use of this invocation of good works. The statement is not that *peregrini* are those on the road to Rome, but that there is a particularly worthy type of *peregrini* who was, and he was yet more deserving of hospitality.

A famed letter from Charlemagne to Offa, dating to AD 796 concerns, amongst other things, the safe passage of *peregrini*. It states:

*Peregrini* however, who for the love of God and the salvation of their souls have a desire to go to the shrines of the blessed apostles, as before, we have conferred that they may go their own way with peace and without disturbance with their necessary belongings.<sup>458</sup>

In this context, more strongly than that above, the *peregrini* described are pilgrim-like. They wished to visit apostolic sites for the love of God. This is perhaps a more specialist definition from amongst the range of meanings of devotional travellers,

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<sup>457</sup> Alcuin, *Epistolae*. Dümmler 11: *ut benigne harum portitorem litterarum suscipere dignemini, et peregrinationis illius vias domnum Pippinum regem subvenire depraecamini. Regum vero merces in miserorum iuvamine, et maxime peregrinorum sacra sancti Petri principis apostolorum limina petentium.*

<sup>458</sup> Alcuin, *Epistolae*. Dümmler 100: *de peregrinis vero, qui pro amore Dei et salute animarum suarum beatorum limina apostolorum adire desiderant, sicut olim, perdonavimus, cum pace sine omni perturbatione ut vadant suo itinere, secum necessaria portantes.*



specific to these contexts. The letter also discusses the exiled priest Odbert ‘who, on his return from Rome, intends *peregrinare* (to be in *peregrinatio*)’.<sup>459</sup> Odbert was, at the time of the letter being written, in Rome as a political exile. It is curious that immediately after outlining the protection of the pilgrim-like *peregrini*, who needed to be allowed free movement to Rome, the subject turned to an individual whose free movement was being petitioned for, but for whom *peregrinare* represented living in alienation.

In contrast to his epistolary corpus, Alcuin only used the term *peregrinatio* twice within his *Vita Willibrordi*. Both occur in his summation of Willibrord’s life and legacy. First, in Chapter 24, Alcuin praised Willibrord in the context of his death, which he described as passing ‘from this place of *peregrinatio* to the eternal *patria*’.<sup>460</sup> Here, Alcuin directly juxtaposed Willibrord’s *peregrinatio* with the eternal *patria*. Thus it seems plausible that this phrase invoked the allegory of life as *peregrinatio* and did not make reference to his literal time abroad. The second use of *peregrinatio* contrasts with this. In the final paragraph of the summing up chapter, excluded from Talbot’s translation, Alcuin wrote addressing his brethren and readers directly: ‘see, dear brethren, it is a great glory to follow God. [Willibrord] scorned his *patria* for the love of Christ; he chose *peregrinatio*’.<sup>461</sup> Here then, Alcuin explicitly called Willibrord’s life abroad a *peregrinatio*. His final praise invoked the audience to follow in Willibrord’s steps.

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<sup>459</sup> Alcuin, *Epistolae*. Dümmler 100: *qui de Roma rediens, [...] peregrinare volens*.

<sup>460</sup> Alcuin, *Vita Willibrordi* 24: *ex hac peregrinatione ad perpetuam migrabat patriam*.

<sup>461</sup> Alcuin, *Vita Willibrordi* 32: *videte, fratres karissimi, quanta gloria est Deum sequi. Iste pro amore Christi patriam contempsit, peregrinationem elegit*.

Hygeburg used *peregrinatio* in her *Vita Willibaldi* to express and justify Willibald of Eichstätt's desire to travel. It is interesting to note that she did not make use of the language of *peregrinatio* after Willibald had set off on his journey to the Holy Land from Rome. She did not refer to his missionary life as a *peregrinatio*. As a boy, Willibald 'began also to devise means of setting out on *peregrinatio* and travelling to foreign countries that were unknown to him'.<sup>462</sup> Both here, and in early adulthood when Willibald persuaded his father and brother to join him on his journey, he saw *peregrinatio* as the means by which to achieve detachment from earthly possessions.<sup>463</sup> Once in Rome, Willibald and his brother Wynnebald 'gave many thanks to God, because they had escaped unscathed from the grievous perils of the sea and the manifold difficulties of *peregrinatio* in a foreign land'.<sup>464</sup> Finally, Hygeburg described Willibald's desire to travel on from Rome to the Holy Land: 'he longed to go on *peregrinatio* to a more remote and less well known place than the one in which he was now staying'.<sup>465</sup> This is broadly in keeping with the sense of *peregrinatio* as spiritual alienation found in physical alienation. However, there is never the sense that *peregrinatio* is ever anything more specific than religiously justifiable travel.

Willibald of Mainz did not use *peregrinatio* within his *Vita Bonifatii*. However, he once described Boniface as having his heart set on *peregrina loca*.<sup>466</sup> This phrase

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<sup>462</sup> Hygeberg, *Vita Willibaldi* 2: *propinquos deserere peregrinationisque temptare telluram et ignotas externarum requirere ruras*.

<sup>463</sup> Hygeberg, *Vita Willibaldi* 3: Hygeburg described the young Willibald as 'eager to detach him from the pleasures of the world, from the delights of earth and from the false prosperity of wealth', *a seculi voluptatibus, a mundi diliciis, a temporalis vitae falsis divitiarum prosperis suggerendo segregare volebat*.

<sup>464</sup> Hygeberg, *Vita Willibaldi* 3: *immensasque ibidem omnipotenti Deo ac gratas referebant gratias, quod, magnis transmeatis mari discriminis variisque peregrinationis externarum ignominiis*.

<sup>465</sup> Hygeberg, *Vita Willibaldi* 4: *maioram iam tunc peregrinationis ignotitiam adire optabat, quam illa fuit, in qua tunc stare videbatur*.

<sup>466</sup> Willibald, *Vita Bonifatii* 4: he turned his mind 'to set his heart not on remaining in his native land but on *peregrina loca*', *peregrina magis quam paternae hereditatis terrarum loca desiderare*. There is one further example of Willibald's use of the word *peregrinus*, this time in the context of 'stranger'

performs much the same task as the term *peregrinatio*. Willibald, like Hygeburg, set up his saint's desire to travel within the framework of *peregrinatio* as a detachment from earthly possessions. Across the three missionary hagiographies considered, only Alcuin directly called the missionary life a *peregrinatio*.

#### 1.3.4. An Anglo-Saxon *Peregrinatio*

*Peregrinatio* tends not to refer to movement itself, but to products of movement. As such, an awareness of the range of concepts invoked by the term is useful in a broader conceptualization of travel in early medieval narratives and in monastic practice. Understanding travel means getting to grips with some of its products and the concepts that guide it. Initially, *peregrinatio* was an object of study for conceptualizing travel as an assumed expression of travel reflecting journeying, pilgrimage, or casting off into the ocean. Its reality is less inherently mobile, revealing a consequence of moving rather than indicating travel itself. However, it remains a concept deeply ingrained with mobility. As the product of movement, living in alienation or with *peregrini* as guests, or as the manipulation of travel into a metaphor for Christian existence, *peregrinatio* highlights the presence of mobility in an assortment of monastic and ecclesiastical contexts. The expectation of travel symbolism contained in the word, combined with these associations between *peregrinatio*-concepts and movement mean that it is significant within a discussion that seeks to centre mobility and its meaning.

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when Boniface defends his poor spoken Latin to the Pope. In Chapter 6, Willibald reported that Boniface said: “My Lord Pope, as a *peregrinus* I am conscious that I lack the skill in the use of my tongue with which you are familiar, but grant me leisure and time, I beseech you, to write down my confession of faith, so that my words and not my tongue will make a reasonable presentation of the truths I believe”. “*Domine apostolice, novi me imperitum, iam peregrinus, vestrae familiaritatis sermone; sed queso, ut otium mihi, tempus conscribendae fidei concedas, et muta tantum littera meam rationabiliter fidem ad aperiat*”.

Anglo-Saxon use of *peregrinatio* was wide ranging, and even Bede used the term in different ways across his works. Amongst these Anglo-Saxon authors, there is no recognition of the Irish ‘monastic voyagers’ seeking the wilderness in their *peregrinatio*, only the monastic and clerical impulse to live in alienation.<sup>467</sup> The churchmen termed *peregrini* by these Anglo-Saxon authors were not following an Irish model of *peregrinatio*, although the idea to manipulate the justification for missionary work and foreign living through the allegory of *peregrinatio* may have been inspired by the Irish in Britain. English and Irish ideas of *peregrinatio* invoke alienation from the heavenly homeland and are situated within the broader Christian tradition from which they arise. They share an Augustinian focus on exile from the *patria*.

Stephen used the language of *peregrinatio* to invoke movement. This is not the only way in which Stephen was unusual in his use of the language of *peregrinatio*. Stephen praised Wilfrid’s hosts and supporters during his time in political exile, highlighting their spiritual reward. The counter to this is those who rejected Wilfrid, who persecuted him, they turned away a *peregrinus* and as such will be found to be lacking in good works when they meet their judgement. Bede did not reject this interpretation of Wilfrid’s life, although he transferred all references to Wilfrid as a *peregrinus* to his religiously motivated first journey. Stephen utilized Wilfrid’s political exile to great effect with this manipulation of hospitality towards a *peregrinus*, however, he deliberately refrained from engaging with Wilfrid’s alienation as allegorical. The political context of Stephen’s saint resisted the appropriation of exile within a spiritual and allegorical framework. He made a single example of reframing political exile as cognate with allegorical exile. Wilfrid’s support for Dagobert’s political exile was

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<sup>467</sup> For ‘monastic voyagers’ see Wooding, “Monastic Voyaging”; “‘Peregrini’”.

justified with reference to *peregrinatio* of alienation, indirectly providing encouragement for Wilfrid's supporters to see his exile and persecution in the same light. This one use of rhetoric concerning allegorical and political exile highlights its absence elsewhere in Stephen's narrative.

By contrast, Bede's understanding of *peregrinatio* was as wide-ranging as the concept. Across his commentaries, he engaged with *peregrini*, travellers who were to be offered hospitality, and with the Christian condition of alienation. The allegory of alienation was not a feature that Bede felt required to explain, alluding to it through his commentaries but never discussing it, its nature, or its meaning. Whilst alms for *peregrini* was touched on in HE, Bede did not engage with the allegory of alienation in his historical or hagiographical writing. Within HE, *peregrinatio* became more literal, it referred to time spent living in self-exile, abroad within a structured ecclesiastical environment. Bede's engagement with *peregrinatio* tended to be ecclesiastical, and his *peregrini* in HE did not usually undertake missionary work during their *peregrinatio*. This is a key side to *peregrinatio* in HE and one that is worth reiterating. Bede made clear that when Wihtberht failed as a missionary, his return to *peregrinatio* in Ireland involved both hermitage and emboldening the faith in his locality.

The widespread understanding of the allegory of *peregrinatio* in this world, and of its parallel living in alienation abroad was likely to impact on writing about *peregrini* and *peregrinatio*. Hagiographies more so than letters, as texts written with an intended audience outside of the existing monastic elite, sought to make aspects of hardship and asceticism clear to ensure that an ideal of becoming a *peregrinus* was tempered with pragmatism and that there was an expectation of admirable monastic character in those

who undertook such a role. This would also account for authors having been limited in their application of the term. An example of the limited presence of the term is Bede's HE, in which many more Anglo-Saxons spent time abroad than are called *peregrini*. Further, in it, Bede's treatment of *peregrini* is bound up with statements about the intentions of their *peregrinatio*, and the characters named as *peregrini* are praised for their work outside of that role, as missionaries, hermits, and educators. Bede's use of travel-related figural symbols was carefully managed, and his engagement with *peregrinatio* is an example of this. *Peregrinatio* was, to Bede's mind, usually temporary. This is particularly emphasized by the case of Egbert who went beyond the basic terms of *peregrinatio* and sought to remain abroad, never returning to his native Britain. The emphasis placed on the specific desires of Egbert in this matter, along with the testimony of those like Willibrord who first undertook *peregrinatio* and then missionary work, strongly demonstrates this facet of *peregrinatio*. Bede sought not to encourage religious individuals into permanent alienation; the potential repercussions if an exodus of *peregrini* were to occur were likely to have been socially and politically significant.

In a broader eighth-century context, *peregrinatio* took on an extensive range of meanings and utilities. In correspondence, Boniface used *peregrinatio* to refer to his real life abroad and occasionally linked it to the figurative expression of this life. For Alcuin, in his *Epistolae*, the allegory of alienation and his life in self-imposed exile merged more frequently. Similarly, in *Vita Willibrordi*, he used *peregrinatio* to express Willibrord's simultaneous alienation from his heavenly and earthly homelands. Alcuin's use of the duality of alienation was not a feature of the other missionary hagiographies. In Hygeburg's *Vita Willibaldi*, *peregrinatio* was the petition and

justification for seeking a life abroad, and the means to achieving a detachment from earthly materiality.

Whilst *peregrinatio* was not the journey itself, as a concept it ties into an Anglo-Saxon understanding of mobility as a means of justifying travel. Having established that travel needed to be controlled and restricted in and by early medieval monasticism,<sup>468</sup> *peregrinatio* as alienation is one such means by which appropriate movement was conceptualized. To live in alienation implies a great deal of mobility, and *peregrinatio* is a key concept in explaining and justifying it. To experience the allegory of alienation was a universal Christian condition that invoked the experience of a journey. Conceptualizing allegorical *peregrinatio* summons medieval experience of both embodied and spiritual movement. The concept of *peregrini* as guests and strangers indicates a means by which travellers interacted with the monastic environment. It is a means by which an aspect of mundane monastic travel can be normalized by scholarship and placed in the context of the running of the monastery. Early medieval authors could also mobilize the concept of *peregrinatio* to shape their presentation of hospitality and the ways in which movement meshes with narrative techniques.

*Peregrinatio* in all of its semantic forms implied or engaged with motion, whether as an allegory for life or a means of living. The presence of *peregrini*, whether as monastic travellers, seekers of alienation, or as foreigners, throughout these texts is indicative of people travelling in a range of ways that were accepted, and with whom the Church and monastic institutions engaged. However, the *peregrinatio* itself tended to be a life abroad, not the journey to get there. Rather than a shallow copy of an Irish

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<sup>468</sup> In Chapter 1.2.

concept, *peregrinatio* was an active way of conceptualizing travel in Anglo-Saxon writing. This chapter has demonstrated the ways in which Anglo-Saxon authors, like their Irish counterparts, grappled with universal Christian ideas and transformed them into useful notions that could express, justify or praise the movements of their saints.





# PART 2:

## NARRATED TRAVEL



## 2.1. The Sea

‘Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more’.<sup>469</sup> Thus John opens Revelation 21. Of the absence of the sea at the time of the new Jerusalem, Bede, following patristic tradition and quoting Primasius verbatim, explained that John ‘signified by the word “sea” the stormy life of this world, which then shall cease’.<sup>470</sup> Here then, the primary allegory of the sea is that it is figurative of the turbulent and sinful world, which will be stilled by God’s hand at the end of time. The sea is set against the *stabilis* eternity of the heavenly kingdom. The allegory of the sea as the turbulent world influenced the role of the sea in narratives, it can be understood to amplify and emphasize miracles of the sea. As part 1.1.2 outlined, an understanding of *stabilitas* called upon the allegory of the sea, and seen in part 1.3.3, this figurative image of the sea might be invoked alongside the allegory of *peregrinatio*. This sea and the eschatological weight that it holds influence the use of sea travel within narrative hagiography and history. The allegory of the sea is significant in the writing of travel. Figurative conceptualizations of the sea influence the meanings implied by narrative engagement with the sea and, because it is not frequently used, it can be understood to intensify the significance of miracles on the sea.

In hagiography, the intercessions or interventions of the saints still the waters temporarily overcoming the turbulent waves in anticipation of the future in which the

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<sup>469</sup> Revelation 21:1: *et vidi caelum novum et terram novam primum enim caelum et prima terra abiit et mare iam non est.*

<sup>470</sup> *ExpApoc* Book 3, 36 [21:1], 260: *turbulentam huius saeculi uitam, quae tunc cessabit, maris nomine figuravit.*

sea will be stilled permanently. The sea and its role in miracles should be read as an intensifier, drawing attention to God's actions through and for his saint. Diarmuid Scully, in his introduction to Seán Connolly's translation of *InHab*, commented that the image of the saint quelling the waves is God's victory over paganism and sin.<sup>471</sup> While this is the case to some extent, it underplays the background to the interpretation. The allegory of the restless sea as this world's evils is inherently connected with the apocalypse. Only then will the sea, and earthly evils, be overcome forever. Victories over the sea in this age are temporary reminders of the promise, and threat, of the future age.

These themes in Anglo-Saxon writing have been noted before. In his discussion of maritime motifs in Anglo-Saxon literature, Winfried Rudolf notes the direct correspondence between the fluctuations of the sea and of secular existence.<sup>472</sup> He comments on the role played by imagery of the sea of this life, upon which humanity is exposed to tempests and hardships. In particular he draws attention to Boniface's use of wave-tossed travels on the sea as an example of turning 'the absence from his home island into an on-going insecure sea-journey, whether he was on a ship to Frisia or treading perfectly solid Thuringian or Frankish soil'.<sup>473</sup> Here, rather than focussing on the restless sea, Rudolf connects elements of multiple allegories into one, presenting a correspondence between the role of the sea and voyaging on it, the *instabilitas* of the seas of this world, and the use of self-imposed exile as a means of achieving the safe port of the next life. While Boniface did invoke self-alienation and the sea

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<sup>471</sup> Diarmuid Scully, "Introduction", in *Bede: On Tobit and on the Canticle of Habakkuk*, ed. Seán Connolly (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1997), 17-38, at 34.

<sup>472</sup> Rudolf, "Spiritual Islescape".

<sup>473</sup> *Ibid.*, 47. Boniface and his correspondents do use the sea allegory more so than the Northumbrian hagiographers or Alcuin, see for example Boniface, *Epistolae*. Tangl 14, Emerton 6; Tangl 30, Emerton 18; and Tangl 78, Emerton 35.

simultaneously, as was discussed in 1.3.3, an appreciation of his poetic elegy of absence elaborated with maritime imagery and the idea of *peregrinatio* does not account for the underlying implication of invoking the sea and the allegorical significance of both imagined and narrated seafaring. Rudolf presents eschatological coastal imagery in its broad context, highlighting many maritime elements that might be seen to herald Judgement and outlining the significance of the sea to the Anglo-Saxon faithful contemplating their soul-journey after death. However, the sea itself is an allegorical force and an intensifier; its own implications add to the impact of God's interactions with his saints during their lifetimes as well as at the time of Judgement.

The 'real' presence of the sea was influential. In exploring the image of the desert in the sea, Juliet Mullins outlined that the sea in biblical, patristic, and Anglo-Saxon traditions was a fearsome force.<sup>474</sup> This was, she argued, despite the importance of the ocean to the Anglo-Saxons. She framed her discussion within the Old English poetic tradition, which engaged particularly with humanity's experience of the sea: *The Wanderer*, *The Seafarer*, *The Whale*, and *Exodus*. Across these poems, the image of the sea is complex and (apparently) contradictory: hostile and unforgiving while also a place of spiritual and physical testing where God might be found.<sup>475</sup> However, surely the spiritual and physical testing came from the hostility of the environment. In this context, God was found through *passio*. She further argued that the depiction of the sea in the eighth-century Latin hagiographical tradition is also contradictory.<sup>476</sup> Her interpretation reduced the sea's role and significance in these texts; she commented that 'the sea and its tossing waves represent the antithesis of the saintly ideal of

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<sup>474</sup> Mullins, "*Herimum in Mari*".

<sup>475</sup> *Ibid.*, 64.

<sup>476</sup> *Ibid.*, 70.

composure and inner calm'.<sup>477</sup> This limited view of the role of the sea in Cuthbert or Guthlac's life does not engage with the danger and its figurative purpose, which the allegory of the sea explains more fully.

Mullins also argued that these poems and hagiographies depict the practice of *peregrinatio*.<sup>478</sup> However, a direct connection between the sea and *peregrinatio* is only found in the context of monastic voyaging, the Irish form of *peregrinatio* that was not found in the Anglo-Saxon tradition.<sup>479</sup> An assumption that there was an inherent connection between the sea and *peregrinatio* reduces the proposed intellectual context within which the authors of this period were working. The allegories of the sea and of *peregrinatio* can both be used as abstractions for this earthly life, but they are not equivalent. The sea is figurative of this life as turbulent and wild, a constant challenge in this age, waiting to be stilled by God's hand in favour of heavenly *stabilitas* when the sea is no more. *Peregrinatio* as an allegory, by contrast, sees the Church and the individual faithful as exiles from their heavenly homeland and this earthly life as a journey home, or period of exile. The two allegories could be, and were, used together but they are not analogous.

In the image of the restless sea as this sinful life, the evil that the seas represent may change form dependent on circumstance. Different examples singled out by Bede suggest some of the various threats from which he felt his church suffered. The multiplicity can be seen in one example from *DTab*,

the waves of the deep, brackish, and turbulent sea can signify both the sins  
among which the reprobate are lost in this life when they delight in evil,

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<sup>477</sup> Ibid., 71.

<sup>478</sup> Ibid., 64-5.

<sup>479</sup> As was discussed in Chapter 1.3.

and also the pit of future perdition, when at the last judgement they will be sent with the devil into eternal fire.<sup>480</sup>

Elsewhere, for instance in *InHab*, Bede explicitly connected water with the hearts of the unbelievers.<sup>481</sup> This is a particular threat of the tumultuous secular world. In his commentary on the Epistle of Jude, he commented that the ‘wild waves of the sea are the perverse teachers who are both always restless and stirred up within themselves, dark and bitter, and do not stop forever assailing the peace of the Church’.<sup>482</sup> Bede did not submit in fear to these false teachers. Instead, he said of them: ‘like surging waves, the higher they raise themselves up in their pride, the more disordered they are and broken up into the frothy foam and perish’.<sup>483</sup>

The primary allegory of the sea was widely understood; however, it is not the case that every reference to the sea was figural. Within his commentaries, Bede made practical explanations of the sea more frequently than he engaged with the sea as a figurative entity. Within this discussion, the central argument is that there is one fundamental allegory of the sea from which perceptions of the sea developed. Despite not being frequently applied in scriptural exegesis, this allegory was commonly understood and infiltrated a wide range of hagiographical and other literary contexts. Bede’s careful

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<sup>480</sup> *DTab* Book 2 [26:23], 73: *maris namque fluctus profundum amari et turbulenti et peccata possunt significare quibus reprobi in hac uita male delectati intereunt et future quoque baratrum perditionis cum in ultimo examine in ignem cum diabolo mittentur.*

<sup>481</sup> Habakkuk 3.8 asks ‘was your wrath against the rivers, Lord, or was your fury against the rivers or your indignation against the sea?’ To this, Bede responded in *InHab* 19.2-3 [3:8], 78: ‘The term ‘rivers’ and ‘sea’ represents the hearts of unbelievers, which are rightly called rivers because by the whole force of their tendency they flow down towards lower <levels>; <they are called> the sea because they are inwardly darkened by disordered and bitter thoughts and exalt themselves above the rest by the swollen waters of boasting’. *Fluminum et maris uocabulo corda exprimuntur infidelium, quae flumina recte uocantur, quia toto intentionis impetu ad inferior defluunt mare quia turbidis amarisque cogitationibus intus obscurantur, et super ceteros sese timidis iactantiae gurgitibus extollunt.*

<sup>482</sup> *EpistCath* [Jude 13], 247-8: *fluctus feri maris sunt peruersi doctores qui et in semet ipsis inquieti semper tumidi tenebrosi et amari sunt et pacem ecclesiae quasi stabilitatem firmitatemque obicem semper impugnare non cessant.*

<sup>483</sup> *EpistCath* [Jude 13], 248: *quia instar tumentium undarum quanto altius se superbientes adtollunt tanto amplius confuse quasi in spumas leuissimas dissoluuntur et pereunt.*



application of the figure of the sea emphasized certain key moments in significant saints' actions. Bede's use is not typical of all authors' figural identification of the sea. Stephen, instead, engaged with the allegory of the sea on each occasion that Wilfrid travelled by sea; his frequent indication of the role of God's hand in guiding and keeping Wilfrid is a means of emphasizing that God chose and maintained Wilfrid through his labours.

Elsewhere, the allegory could be used rhetorically. The anonymous author of VG used the figure of the sea in seeking to establish the good character of Gregory the Great. The author called upon its symbolism in the context of Gregory's decision to leave the secular world and enter a monastery. The anonymous author stated: 'so, eagerly fleeing from all these things, he sought the haven of a monastery and escaped naked from the shipwreck of this life'.<sup>484</sup> In a transformative experience for Gregory, the anonymous author pressed the allegory calling upon the imagery of a storm dragging a ship from a sheltering shore.<sup>485</sup> The secular world, with its cares and attractions, dragged Gregory from the sheltering peace of the monastery because he was in need of more secure moorings.<sup>486</sup> After this, he was called to obedience, ministry, and pastoral care.<sup>487</sup> The chapter continues to draw on the same analogy. Once in the monastery,

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<sup>484</sup> VG 2: *que tandem cuncta sollicitate fugiens, portum monasterii petisse ex huius vite naufragio nudus evadens.*

<sup>485</sup> VG 2: 'just as when a storm arises it drags a carelessly moored ship even from the lee of a sheltering shore', *quia enim plerumque navem incaute religatam, etiam de sinu tuti littoris excutit, cum tempestas excrescit.*

<sup>486</sup> VG 2. The anonymous author puts words into Gregory's mouth: "I suddenly found myself, though wearing the dress of an ecclesiastical order, tossed in the waves of secular cares and losing the peace of the monastery because, when I had done it, I did not hang on to it as firmly as I should have done", *"repente me sub pretextu ecclesiastici ordinis, in curarum secularium pelago reperi quietem monasterii, quia habendo non fortiter tenui, quam stricte tenenda fuerit, perdendo cognovi"*.

<sup>487</sup> Colgrave suggested that this simile would appeal to Whitby monks because of the location of Whitby, see Colgrave, *Earliest Life*, 74-5. However, it is clearly more than that. The secular world, this life, is the ocean; this idea is taken up across the Christian world.

the fellowship of brotherly love enabled him to bind himself to his brethren.<sup>488</sup> This laboured analogy clearly drew on the idea that the seas and waves were the turbulent secular life, and that its escape through monasticism in anticipation of the next life was *stabilitas*. Although the anonymous did not use this language explicitly, he drew on the idea of monastic *stabilitas* in a turbulent world, particularly in the sense of collective perseverance. The idea that the monastery and brethren, bound together in work and prayer, are the land and therefore a temporary *stabilitas* that prefigures the new Jerusalem and are a contrast with *instabilitas* of the turbulent seas.

In general, the hagiographical traditions considered in this thesis rarely presented sea travel. When it occurred, it was often incidental. In addition to these incidental details, the single allegory and variations upon it feature through both miracles and references to good sailing.<sup>489</sup> Because of the scarceness of the sea in these narratives and of miracles that engage with it, when the allegory of the sea is invoked through miracles and good fortunes on the water, it can be seen to emphasize the divinity of the saint under discussion. For example, across the missionary hagiographies, practical details occur across all three texts considered.<sup>490</sup> In addition, all make particular reference to safe or easy sailing when establishing the missionaries' early journeys abroad, which

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<sup>488</sup> VG 2: 'through their unremitting example, I could bind myself, as it were by an anchor cable, to the calm shores of prayer; while being tossed about by the ceaseless tide of secular business, I fled to their fellowship as to the refuge of a safe port from the currents and waves of earthly affairs'. *Ut eorum semper exemplo ad orationis placidum litus, quasi anchore fune restringerer cum causarum secularium incessabili impulsu fluctuarem. Ad illorum quippe consortium, velut ad tutissimi portus sinum, terreni actus flumina fluctusque fugiebam.*

<sup>489</sup> Because sailing required the wind to blow in the desired direction and a choppy and dangerous North Sea was to be expected, an explicit reference to good or straightforward sailing implies God's hand in providing the right winds and calming the sea. Thus, when a good sailing is noted in these narratives, it should be taken alongside the miracles as an example of God aiding his saint upon the sea in promise of the future.

<sup>490</sup> Willibald, *Vita Bonifatii* in particular 4, but also 5 and 8; Hygeberg, *Vita Willibaldi* 3 and 4 (in which various travels on the Mediterranean are expressed simply); and Alcuin, *Vita Willibrordi* 9 and 10.

provides a sense of divine sanction.<sup>491</sup> This divine sanction engages with the allegory of the sea, the waves are calm and God directs the action of his saints to do his work.

The Northumbrian hagiographies rarely give sea travel more than an incidental focus. For instance, the practicalities of Biscop's travel did not interest Bede. He noted only two occasions when Biscop travelled by sea, neither of which express more than the base practicality of leaving an island.<sup>492</sup> With similar lacklustre interest, he mentioned that Ceolfrith made his way by sea to the Continent on his final journey.<sup>493</sup> In VCeol 33, the hardship of the sea was mentioned in passing: on one day when his ship was storm-tossed, and he was hard at work sailing, Ceolfrith was so weak that he did not perform mass. Within HE, water travel was mentioned incidentally or, on some occasions, can be assumed because Britain is an island. Examples from across Books 4 and 5 include sea travel on the Mediterranean, travel between Britain and the Continent, and between Britain and Ireland.<sup>494</sup> Similar realities were present in the earlier context, emphasizing the island nature of Britain. For example, in Book 1 the origin narratives touch upon sea travel based in the reality of Britain as an island and the requirement for boats to move people to or from it: invasions by Romans, Picts and Irish; the counter, sea-based aid, which turns into migration; and Augustine of

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<sup>491</sup> Willibald, *Vita Bonifatii* 4 and 5; and Alcuin, *Vita Willibrordi* 4 and 5. Hygeberg, *Vita Willibaldi* 3 makes more of it stating: 'when they had braved the dangers at sea and the perils of the mountainous waves, a swift course brought them with full sails and following winds safely to dry land'. *Cumque, transmeatis maritimis fluctuum formidinibus periculosisque pelagii pressuris, vastum per aequorum citato celocis cursu, prosperis ventis, velata nave, tuti aridam viderunt terram.*

<sup>492</sup> HA 3, a merchant vessel arrived at Lérins, an island monastery where he was staying, so he was able to go to Rome. HA 5, Bede simply notes that he crossed the sea to France to look for masons to build the church in the Roman style and brought them home with him. The same mention of Biscop crossing the sea in search of builders is made in VCeol 7.

<sup>493</sup> HA 22.

<sup>494</sup> HE iv.1 contains Archbishop Theodore and Abbot Hadrian's journey to Canterbury. It includes travel both between Britain and the Continent, and on the Mediterranean. In v.15, Adomnán is noted to have sailed to Ireland to preach there.

Canterbury's arrival in Kent.<sup>495</sup> These references represent something of the real world place of sea travel within long-distance movement; their briefness reflects the solemn role that the sea could play when it was invoked more substantively.

Outside of these contexts, in which the physical reality necessitated the presence of boats, sea travel engaged with the allegorical victory over this age. There are three temporary victories over the sea in Bede's HE. This is the most direct miracle type to engage with the allegory of the sea. The chronologically earliest figural use of the sea in HE comes with Germanus of Auxerre's journeys to Britain, for which Bede followed Constantius of Lyon's fifth-century *Vita Germani*.<sup>496</sup> In HE i.17, Germanus was crossing the Channel when the devil's fury raised a storm; Germanus was asleep, but when he was woken, he called on Christ.<sup>497</sup> The devil's storm invokes the idea that the sea is the vehicle of the evils of this world. Germanus calmed the sea in imitation of Christ on Lake Galilee (Matthew 8:24-27), as it is the Lord who ultimately can quieten the iniquities of this world. Aidan, the first bishop of Lindisfarne, quelled the waves with his prayers in HE iii.15, allowing the safe passage of the soon-to-be Queen Eanflæd from Kent to Northumbria. In Book 5, Guthfrith, a priest at Lindisfarne who later became abbot, went to Farne to talk with Æthelwald, who was in hermitage there. When Guthfrith returned home on the sea, a fierce tempest arose and they could not

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<sup>495</sup> HE i.1 depicts origins from overseas. There are sea-based invasions, by the Romans, HE i.2, and later by the Picts and Irish, i.12. Then the sea-based aid that comes from the Saxons, invited in i.14, and settled in i.15. For a discussion of the lack of emphasis on the sea as a place of origin, see Michelet, "Lost at Sea". For Augustine's arrival, see HE i.25.

<sup>496</sup> HE i.17; Constantius of Lyon, *Vita Germani*, trans. F. R. Hoare, in *Soldiers of Christ*, ed. Thomas F. X. Noble and Thomas Head (London: Sheed & Ward, 1995), 75-106, see Chapter 13.

<sup>497</sup> Bede additionally narrated a second crossing made by Germanus in HE i.21. Germanus took to sea and reached Britain after a good voyage with favouring winds. The favourable winds, worth commenting on in the narrative, can be taken as God's hand in taming the sea at work.

move; Æthelwald calmed the sea until they reached land.<sup>498</sup> In these three instances, the intercessions of a saint subdued the sea. God stilled the violent world for his saints.

The dangers of water transport call strongly on the metaphor of the sea as the volatility of this life, and God and his saints' role in creating temporary stability. Bede invoked the real dangers of sea travel infrequently: Peter, abbot of Canterbury monastery, was drowned in *Amfleaf* bay on the way to Gaul, in HE i.33; and when Romanus was sent to Rome to see Pope Honorius, he drowned on the Italian sea, in HE ii.20. However, for Stephen, this type of engagement with the sea was the backdrop for his most frequent comment about Wilfrid's sailings: that they were pleasant and safe.<sup>499</sup> Hidden behind this quiet comment was likely the understanding that sea travel could be dangerous, and that danger had allegorical as well as literal presence. The reality of the hazards of the sea and sea travel add pertinence to the allegory.

The seas play a consistent role in God's direct interaction and intervention in saints' lives. On occasion, He physically moves them to where He needs them to be, He provides for them, and brings objects to them. While directly concerned with the interplay between God and his servants, this miracle type is best understood in the context of the allegory of the sea. God alone has the power to tame the waters, and he does so temporarily both in these miracles, as well as in those that directly refer to the allegory and testify to his future promise that the sea will be no more. The only time that Bede used this miracle type was at the end of HE, in Book 5, this position may relate to the eschatological nature of God's overt intervention through the sea in the

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<sup>498</sup> HE v.1.

<sup>499</sup> He made a pleasant sailing in VW 7, 26, and 57; in VW 34, Stephen noted that Wilfrid crossed the ocean with God's help. As a collection of North Sea crossings, 2.3.1a deals with this corpus in comparison to Bede's presentation of Wilfrid's sailings.

lives and actions of his servants. God directed Egbert and Wihtberht against missionary activity in v.9. Egbert had planned to journey and convert the heathens, and a tempest showed him his error, and Wihtberht tried to take a ship to Frisia, but it was useless so he returned to his exile in Ireland.<sup>500</sup> God's hand can be seen guiding His servants to do His work, and this is underpinned by the threat and promise of the end of time.

Other Northumbrian authors applied the miracles on the sea sparingly, and thus those that were recorded are due attention. In particular, they tended to use the idea of God's direct interaction and intervention in saints' lives. The seaborne aspect of Ceolfrith's final journey, as depicted in the anonymous VCeol, can be interpreted as God directing the path of his servant. Ceolfrith boarded a ship at the mouth of the Humber on 4 July. Before it reached the Frankish coast, it was driven off course and landed in three provinces, and in each, he was honourably received.<sup>501</sup> It is a claim of his receipt of hospitality and a demonstration of God acting and directing Ceolfrith though the sea and weather. This can be interpreted in the light of God providing for and directing Ceolfrith in his earthly journey in a way that will be echoed in his heavenly life. In the Cuthbertine narratives, God both provides and directs. In the episode with the 'Niduari', he does both.<sup>502</sup> Cuthbert and companions travelled by sea to the 'Niduari'; they arrived at Christmas and hoped to take advantage of the calm sea to return soon,

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<sup>500</sup> Sally Shockro has commented that the Egbert incident is modelled upon Jonas, based on the words that he speaks; see "Reading Bede as Bede Would Read" (PhD Thesis, Boston College, 2008), 180-81. Egbert follows the Jonas-like behaviour as the unwilling but successful prophet, thus making Egbert more than a failed missionary. This reading can be amplified with reference to the allegory of the sea as an intensifier.

<sup>501</sup> VCeol 31.

<sup>502</sup> This episode is contained in VCA ii.4, and VCP 11. The provenance and location of the 'Niduari' are unknown, although the general trend from the twentieth-century has been to identify southern Fife as their home, most recently discussed by Andrew Breeze, "St Cuthbert, Bede, and the *Niduari* of Pictland", *Northern History* 40, no. 2 (2003): 365-7.

so they did not trouble with provisions. When they landed, a storm rose and cut them off. Because of their prayers, they were miraculously provided with meat. Thus, God is given agency both in controlling when they departed and in providing for them from the sea. God also provided for Cuthbert on the isle of Farne, by bringing him driftwood on the tide suitable for flooring.<sup>503</sup>

Stephen's core imagery when writing about sea travel called upon the providential nature of Wilfrid's voyages. He liked to reference the prosperous journey and the safety of the harbour upon the conclusion of a journey. In his earlier years, having been to Rome and spent time in Lyon, Wilfrid's return to Northumbria is described as 'with the aid of the holy relics, and when the wind blew as the sailors wished, they made a prosperous voyage towards their own land, to a harbour of safety'.<sup>504</sup> Behind the simplicity of this description is the implied potential threat of the sea, which is the conceptual antithesis of a 'harbour of safety'. Stephen invokes the threat of the dangers of the sea through the implication of what a favourable journey disguises, and the *portus salutis* invokes the dichotomy between the turbulent sea of this life and the steadfastness of land and of God acting through relics and through his saint.<sup>505</sup> Wilfrid's third and final return from Rome echoes his first as Stephen invoked God's aid in finding a *portus salutis*. Stephen noted that 'by the help of God, they found a safe harbour in the land of Kent'.<sup>506</sup> God's intervention in protecting his saint from the

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<sup>503</sup> VCP 21. The same miracle occurs in VCA iii.4.

<sup>504</sup> VW 7: *reliquiarum sanctorum auxilio navem ascendens, flante vento secundum desiderium nautarum, ad regionem suam prospere in portum salutis pervenerunt.*

<sup>505</sup> *Salus* meaning 'spiritual well-being' or 'salvation' as well as 'safety' or 'security', see DMLBS s.v. *salus*, 2 and 5.

<sup>506</sup> VW 57: *in Cantuaria regione portum salutis Deo adiuvante invenerunt.*

turbulent waves, both at sea and in locating a port, is made clear in these brief statements.

Stephen made divine intervention more pertinent on Wilfrid's second journey to Rome. Wilfrid had heard that his enemies had gathered in Neustria intending to rob him, and so he travelled instead to Frisia where he received hospitality from their king, Aldgisl, and preached to the heathens. God enabled the wind to blow in accordance with Wilfrid's wishes, and thus protected him from the persecutions of Ebroin, mayor of the palace of Neustria.<sup>507</sup> Stephen showed God and Wilfrid to be working together and in agreement. Again, Stephen noted that God protected and aided Wilfrid on his return voyage.<sup>508</sup> By invoking God's hand at work, directing and protecting Wilfrid, Stephen ensured that this journey and Wilfrid's interactions with foreign kings appear providentially determined.

The most spectacular show of God's hand guiding Wilfrid occurs early in VW, in chapter 13 God directed Wilfrid to the South Saxons using a storm.

While they were crossing the British sea on their return from Gaul with Bishop Wilfrid of blessed memory, and the priests were praising God with psalms and hymns, giving the time to the oarsmen, a violent storm arose in mid-ocean and the winds were contrary, [...] the foam-crested waves hurled them on to the land of the South Saxons which they did not know.

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<sup>507</sup> VW 26: 'our holy bishop, with a west wind blowing gently according to his wish, and with the vessels heading eastward, came after a prosperous voyage to Friesland with all his companions', *sanctus pontifex noster, secundum desiderium eius flante zefiro vento ab occidente temperanter, versis navium rostris ad orientem, usque dum in Freis prospere cum omnibus pervenit.*

<sup>508</sup> VW 34: 'then, having traversed many lands, and with the help of God having passed over a great tract of sea by ship, he reached his own land unharmed, together with all his companions, to the great joy of his subjects who were languishing with weariness, and crying out to the Lord with tears'. *Deinde longa spatia terrarum peragrans, Dei adiutorio in navigio maris magnitudinem superans, illaesus cum omnibus evasit ad regionem propriam, in subditorum suorum taedio languentium et ad Dominum cum lacrimis clamantium maximum gaudium vita comite veniens.*



Then the sea left ship and men high and dry, fled from the land, and, laying the shores bare, withdrew into the depth of the abyss.<sup>509</sup>

Following Wilfrid and his companions' miraculous defeat of the South Saxon pagans, Stephen notes that:

Then the great bishop prayed to the Lord his God, who straightway bade the tide return before its usual hour and, while the pagans, on the coming of their king, were preparing with all their strength for a fourth battle, the sea came flowing back and covered all the shore, so that the ship was floated and made its way into the deep. They returned thanks to God for the glorious way He had honoured them, and with a south-west wind they prosperously reached a port of safety at Sandwich.<sup>510</sup>

Throughout this chapter, God can be seen intervening in His saint's life and actions. This emphasizes the importance of the chapter in Stephen's conceptualization of Wilfrid's significance. Here, the providential journey to the South Saxons, underlined by the connotations that the allegory of the sea provides for it, sets the scene for the precursor to Wilfrid's missionary work in the area. God interacted with Wilfrid through the weather, He made the sea a conduit for His wish, and Wilfrid was taken to the South Saxons. God's hand then pulls Wilfrid back from the brink of a fourth battle, and God's transformation of the weather, once again, allowed for the final moments of the journey's narrative to highlight divine intervention in a prosperous or good crossing.

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<sup>509</sup> VW 13: *navigantibus quoque eis de Gallia Britannicum mare cum beatae memoriae Wilfritho episcopo, canentibus clericis et psallentibus laudem Dei pro celeumate in choro, in medio mari validissima tempestas exorta est et venti contrarii, [...] albescentia undarum culmina in regionem australium Saxonum, quam non noverant, proiecerunt eos. Mare quoque navem et homines relinquens, terras fugiens, litoraue detegens, et in abyssi matricem recessit.*

<sup>510</sup> VW 13: *Praeparantibus autem paganis cum rege veniente totis viribus ad quartum proelium, tunc mare redundans fluctibus tota litora implevit, elevataque nave, cimba processit in altum. Gloriose autem a Deo honorificati, gratias ei agentes, vento flante ab affrico, prospere in portum Sandwicae salutis pervenerunt.*

Wilfrid's first narrated act as a newly ordained bishop is this victory over the South Saxon pagans. In the aftermath of his first narrated conflict with the sacrilegious world outside of his companions and supporters, Stephen returned Wilfrid to Sandwich, a *portus salutis*. This might be compared to the beach upon which he had been washed ashore earlier. Metaphorically, it connects with the imagery of the stability of ports compared to the instability of the turbulent world. For their profane beliefs and behaviours, 'pagans' might be used rhetorically as an exaggeration of the ungodly secular world, whilst the living nature of the sea in this story show it to be that impious world as well. In this chapter, Stephen brought together two rhetorical battles with the ungodly, won by Wilfrid, with God's aid, as his first episcopal act. The strength and connotations of the allegory of the sea reinforces Wilfrid's victory over the pagans, and raises up Wilfrid's admittance to the *portus salutis* at the conclusion of the chapter. Three times, in three of the four sea voyages back to Britain, Stephen concluded his description of Wilfrid's journeying with a reference to his entry into a *portus salutis*. The safety and salvation of the port concludes time spent on the turbulent waves and travelling in the turbulent world.

In the Irish hagiographical context, authors engaged with the sea differently from one another. For Brigitine and Patrician authors, water forms little of their framework, and neither water transport nor sea miracles are a particular feature. Similar to the Northumbrian authors, this adds emphasis to the occasions when water was used in a miraculous context. However, in *Vita Columbae* Adomnán mentioned boats, ships,

sailing and rowing thirty-five times, he explicitly used the sea and miracles on it to outline Columba's strengths and his divine backing.<sup>511</sup>

Adomnán narrated Columba's engagement with the sea in miracles that cover all three types outlined above, that is, by giving examples of temporary victories over the sea, of God interacting with His saint through the sea, and of protection from the dangers of the sea. The significance of these miracles in the narrative and to their audience can be magnified with reference to the allegory of the sea. The most direct engagement with the allegory is when Columba himself experienced a storm at sea. In *Vita Columbae* ii.12, Columba was at sea and threatened by a great storm. Christ-like, he prayed, and the sea was stilled. Another way in which the intercession or will of Columba was shown, through the grace of God, to overcome the forces of the sea are in a series of miracles in which Adomnán narrated Columba bending the sea and weather to his will. Adomnán commented upon this in both the opening and closing of *Vita Columbae*. In total, he illustrated it in eight chapters.<sup>512</sup> These include Chapter ii.45, with its three posthumous examples of this miracle type.<sup>513</sup> There is a duality to these comments: the practicality of the desirable nature of favourable winds, and a

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<sup>511</sup> These are Adomnán, *Vita Columbae* i.1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 12, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 28, 30, 32, 33, 34, 41, 43, 45; ii.3, 4, 12, 13, 14, 15, 22, 27, 34, 38, 39, 42, 45; and twice in iii.23.

<sup>512</sup> These are i.1, i.18, ii.4, ii.15, ii.34, ii.39, ii.42, and ii.45. In a further incident, Columba was involved in a battle with wizards in ii.34: Briochan cast a mist and adverse winds on the day that Columba intended to sail. Columba came to Loch Ness, which was covered in mist and the wind was blowing against them. Columba called on Christ and boarded the boat with his sailors. He hoisted the sail and the boat moved off directly. In this episode, Columba is not stated to have changed the wind, but rather that his boat sailed against the wind miraculously.

<sup>513</sup> First, prayers to Columba ensured favourable winds for the transportation of timbers to Iona to construct a great house. Secondly, more trees were being towed to be used in repairs of the monastery. It was still and they had to use the oars, then a wind blew against them, and they sheltered at the nearest island (Eilean Shona), then Columba sent a wind from the northeast, and they went away. Thirdly, Adomnán had been at a meeting of the Irish synod, and on return found himself delayed amongst the Cenel Loairn. They had reached Saine, and it was the eve of Columba's feast. Adomnán asked Columba for a favourable wind so that he could enjoy his feast with Columba's people in his own church. Soon a south wind rose and they had fast voyage without the labour of rowing.

suggestion that Columba's intercession could lessen toiling and spiritual labour. For Adomnán, the dangers that God and Columba protected sailors from include stormy weather, water-monsters, and the unpredictable sea.<sup>514</sup> The island and monastery of Iona was located within an extensive maritime network, and seafaring was a necessary part of monastic engagement with both the secular and ecclesiastic world. It was therefore important for the monastery to have a saint that had proven abilities on the sea. This does not detract from the significances implied through repeated connections to the allegory of the sea through miracles on and of the sea.

Contrastingly, Patrician material includes only a limited number of brief, in-passing, references to sea-based transport. Muirchú mentioned sea travel occasionally in contexts that are circumstantial and illustrate nothing more than Ireland's position as an island.<sup>515</sup> In Tírechán's *Collectanea* 1, Patrick 'walked and sailed on water, in plains, and in mountain valleys throughout Gaul and the whole of Italy and the islands in the Tyrrhene Sea'.<sup>516</sup> This is the only occasion on which Tírechán referenced waterborne travel. Brigit was rarely associated with water. Cogitosus did not include a single water-related episode. *Vita prima* contains two episodes in which Brigit, through God, sent objects to island hermits by placing them in the water and one occasion on which Brigit and her nuns waded across a river that was miraculously only knee-deep.<sup>517</sup>

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<sup>514</sup> Adomnán, *Vita Columbae* i.1, i.4, ii.12, ii.13, iii.23; i.19, ii.27, ii.42; and i.5 and ii.22 respectively.

<sup>515</sup> Muirchú, *Vita Patricii* i.1, 2, 6(5), 11(10), 14(13), and 27(26).

<sup>516</sup> Tírechán, *Collectanea* 1: *ambulavit et navigavit in fluctibus et campistibus locis et in conuallibus montanis per Gallias atque Italiam totam atque in insolis quae sunt in mari Terreno.*

<sup>517</sup> Respectively *Vita Prima* 112 and 113, and 95. In the latter, because of this miracle, the raft is lent to one of the nuns and promptly sinks. The nun calls out to Brigit, and miraculously makes it to the harbour without getting wet. The first part of the miracle is a type of crossing the red sea (albeit less dramatic), and the final part of the miracle is a twist on the temporary victory over the sea by which saint's intercession stills the water.

Here, the waters served God, who once again tamed them in promise of what is to come.

In the use and implications of the sea in hagiographical narratives, Northumbrian authors appear comparable to their Irish contemporaries. Broadly, whilst the sea travel was, or can be assumed to have been, plentiful, in these narratives it is limited in comparison to its necessity.<sup>518</sup> Further, of those narratives that do identify waterborne transport, few provide substantial details. The scarceness of the representation of the water connects to its significance in an eschatological framework. Thus, when the allegory of the sea and the ultimate stilling of the waves is invoked, miracles upon the sea are intensified, and the saint responsible, augmented.

In many cases of neutral travel language, sea travel can be assumed because of Ireland and Britain's position as islands. There are plentiful occasions where individuals narrated as 'travelling' or 'coming to' might or must have used water transport. Sea travel was important within these narratives as it was within Insular society, but there is a vast difference between the real and imagined significances. In practice, it was an essential connection between kingdoms, with significance for both the economics of the secular world and for the prestige and interactions of ecclesiastic world. In narrative it was an amplifier and a silencer. When narratives of water transport engage with the allegorical position, the sea becomes a wild, treacherous, supernatural force. Central to maritime miracles is the spiritual meaning of the turbulent sea as this world, only calmed by God as a promise of what is to come. The pervasiveness of the allegory,

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<sup>518</sup> The island nature of Britain will necessitate water travel. For positive assessments of the viability and desirability of water transport in and around Northumbria, see 0.2.1, 'The Oceanic Turn', and particularly, Dobson, "Time, Travel and Political Communities"; Ferguson, "Northumbrian Contacts"; Edmonds, "Barrier or Unifying".

and of its representation of the dangers of the sea, is illustrative of real and active concerns about the unpredictability of the sea and its impact on humankind. Hagiographers spiritualized and transformed these concerns into a means of giving greater emphasis to God's interaction with and elevation of their saints.



## 2.2. Land Transport

The complexity of mobility and its use in hagiography is demonstrated in the range of meanings applied to modes of land transport. There is not a single allegorical interpretation against which to consider its narrative utilization and presence. Figurative interpretations of land travel are multifaceted and therefore the separation of mundane and spiritual ideas within the hagiographies requires interpretation beyond the application of allegorical meaning. The richness of meanings associated with travel motifs highlight the importance of uncovering the different ways of being and thinking associated with practices of movement expressed in these narratives. As is the broader purpose of this thesis, the Mobilities paradigm pushes researchers to consider movement outside of the infrastructure of travel. The use of motifs in writing about mobility highlights elements of the social response to travel in these narratives. Interpretation of these tropes allows for scholarly engagement with some of the experiences and meaning of early medieval travel.

Land transport only finds itself occasionally narrated within the sphere of Northumbrian activity. Together, descriptions and allusions shape an image of overland travel as occurring plentifully, habitually, and in a multiplicity of scenarios. Frequently, details regarding modes of transport that would have been involved in the actions narrated within hagiographies are omitted. There are far more occasions of implied travel without details, than explicit travel with them. Despite this, it is possible to amass a sense of the frequency, and modes of transport that underlay the authors' assumptions about travel, and the contexts in which they were both used and evoked.



This chapter first provides a brief overview of figurative interpretations of land transport to highlight the absence of such allegories as narrative tools within the Northumbrian hagiographical corpus. Following that, it presents alternative motifs that engage with aspects of land travel; these highlight the connotations of mobility as these narratives expressed it. Taken together they demonstrate the varied modes by which travel could be conceptualized in significant ways.

### 2.2.1. Allegories of Land Transport

God might drive a chariot as He rides a horse: guiding His people. This figurative use of riding did not impact upon the appearance of vehicles or of horsemen in the Northumbrian hagiographies. The act of riding itself, whatever the beast, could be symbolic of bringing people to the faith and the faithful on their spiritual journey. Bede explained that, when Christ was seated on a donkey on his way to Jerusalem, ‘what was meant was the spiritual journey of those who under the Lord’s leadership are brought by the apostles to see the realms of the Jerusalem that is above’.<sup>519</sup> He reiterated this figurative allegory of the donkey and foal upon which Jesus rode into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday in a homily: the beasts are those amongst the Jews and gentiles who have ‘a guileless heart’, thus those whom Christ can reach but has not yet, whom he guides to Jerusalem.<sup>520</sup> In addition to riding expressing the bringing of new peoples to faith, Christ rides the elect. In doing so, he guides them to the eternal city. Bede explained that when God rode horses, He rode ‘the hearts of [His] elect’ as guidance to victory or salvation in his commentary on Habakkuk 3:8.<sup>521</sup> Riding can be

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<sup>519</sup> *InHab* 20 [3.8(9)], 79: *illorum iter spiritale signabatur, qui domino duce per apostolos ad eius quae sursum est Hierusalem, quae est mater omnium nostrum uidenda regna ducantur.*

<sup>520</sup> *Hom.* ii.3: ‘the donkey and its foal on which he sat when he came to Jerusalem represent those with a guileless heart from among each of the two peoples, namely the Jews and the gentiles’. *Asina et pullus quibus sedens Hierosolimam uenit utriusque populi Iudaei uidelicet et gentilis simplicia corda.*

<sup>521</sup> *InHab* 20 [3.8(9)], 79: *in corda electorum [suorum]. Habakkuk 3:8: ‘was your wrath against the rivers, O Lord? / Or your anger against the rivers / or your rage against the sea, / when you drove your*

salvation when Christ is the rider for ‘riding’ calls to mind imagery of God as the rider of the saints.<sup>522</sup> The allegory of God the rider represents the proactive nature of God’s actions in directing his people and in ruling over them.

Bede called upon the imagery of God as the charioteer driving and directing his apostles and the Gospel writers in similar tone to that with which he depicted God riding the elect and saints. In Bede’s commentary, ‘Pharaoh’s chariot’ and the ‘four-horse chariot of Aminadab’, both referenced in Song of Songs, became figurative of God, although in different ways. Whilst Pharaoh and his company of horsemen were the aggressors against the Israelites, and God their redeemer, Bede explains that in Song of Songs 1:9, the Israelites figuratively were

a “company of horsemen” from then on, because just as a charioteer is accustomed to preside over a company of horsemen, the Lord himself the ruled over that same people in such a way as to take charge of it, and guided it in such a way as to lead it along the way of salvation.<sup>523</sup>

Similarly, Bede noted that “‘Aminadab’ signifies the Lord and Savior who like a driver upon a chariot fills the hearts of his preachers with the grace of the Spirit’.<sup>524</sup> The four-horse chariot in particular is understood in this way because the four horses are the four Gospels. Bede put this image of the four Gospels in motion to a different effect in in *DTemp*, where he compared the wheels of the bases holding the lavers to chariots’

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horses, / your chariots to victory?’ *Numquid in fluminibus iratus es Domine aut in fluminibus furor tuus vel in mari indignatio tua quia ascendes super equos tuos et quadrigae tuae salvatio.*

<sup>522</sup> *InEz* [Nehemiah 1:1–2], 155-6: ‘for the Lord indeed mounts his horses when he illuminates the hearts of preachers with the grace of his mercy so that he can rule them; and his riding is salvation because he not only carries to eternal salvation those over whom he presides by ruling them’. *Ascendit quippe dominus super equos suos cum praedicatorum corda quae regat gratia suae pietatis illustrat, et equitatio eius est sanitas quia et illos quibus regendo praesidet ad salute prouehit aeternam.*

<sup>523</sup> *InCant* Book 1 [1:9], 52: *equitatum autem eum inde uocat quia sicut equitatu auriga praesidere solet ita tunc regendo eidem populo dominus ipse praefuit eum que per iter salutis gubernando deduxit.*

<sup>524</sup> *InCant* Book 4 [6:12], 194: *Aminadab dominum saluatorem significat qui quasi currui praesidens corda praedicatorum sui gratia spiritus.*

wheels, of which there are four as there are four books of the Gospels.<sup>525</sup> In this explorative allegory, Bede intertwined the role of the Gospel and of God as the means by which people were carried to do God's will; the 'word of the Gospel makes some of those whom it teaches chariots of God, and others pillars of God's temple'.<sup>526</sup>

These figurative representations of God's role in the lives of his elect did not influence Bede and his contemporaries' narrative presentation of riders, whether on horse or vehicle. There are no examples when the presence of a saint upon a vehicle or on horseback can be reasonably interpreted as guidance in or to the faith. Instead, as will be outlined below, the meanings that hagiographers applied to the act of riding in these narratives reflects the wider social position of aspects of equestrian mobility. Pedestrian activities run counter to this. Whilst Northumbrian narratives did not maintain the allegorical meaning of walking, it was applied in other hagiographical contexts.

'To walk' can be an expression of living or acting. Thus in walking with God, one is understood to be living under His gaze. Enoch was said to be the first man to walk with God.<sup>527</sup> In doing so, he is understood to have communed with God in every facet of his life. According to Bede, he who is praised for walking with God 'is an inseparable companion, he follows the tracks of the divine commandment in all his actions'.<sup>528</sup> Walking with God is to act in the manner that God requires, with mercy and humility or prudence. Bede explained that Enoch walked with God because he

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<sup>525</sup> *DTemp* Book 2, 20.7, 97-8.

<sup>526</sup> *DTemp* Book 2, 20.7, 97-8: *sermo euangelii quosdam eorum quos instituit currus dei quosdam bases templi dei facit.*

<sup>527</sup> Genesis 5:22-4.

<sup>528</sup> *InGen* Book 2 [5:23-24], 166: *cum sit comes indiuiduus, in cunctis actibus diuinae uestigia sequitur iussionis.*

‘followed the will and commandments of God in everything; with God tarrying in him and possessing and ruling his heart, he practised good works abroad, according to that word of the Prophet’.<sup>529</sup> Enoch served God with good deeds. Bede reflected that, by walking with God in this life and obeying his commandments, Enoch continued to walk with Him, and passed into the next life.<sup>530</sup>

Irish authors utilized the idea that the righteous walk with God in hagiographical texts to express the nature of their saints. This is not a common trope: pedestrian travel in any form is rarely mentioned. In the Brigitine material, there is little walking that contains anything other than a mundane meaning.<sup>531</sup> There is equally little pedestrian travel narrated in Adomnán’s *Vita Columbae* or the Patrician tradition, however, Patrick and Columba are each described as walking on one occasion, and each with a divine presence.

The Irish narrators gave God’s presence with his saint a visual as well as moral form. Macuil Maccugrecae (who was an ungodly, savage tyrant, and also called ‘Cyclops’) ‘saw St. Patrick radiating with the clear light of faith, and resplendent with a certain wonderful diadem of heavenly glory; he saw him [...] walking, with unshaken confidence of doctrine, on a road agreeable’.<sup>532</sup> Knowledge of God gave Patrick

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<sup>529</sup> *InGen* Book 2 [5:21-22], 164-165: *Dei in omnibus uoluntatem et praecepta secutus est; Deo in se commorante et cor eius possidente ac regent, bona foris opera exercuit, iuxta illud prophetae.* The Prophet in question is Micah, in particular Micah 6:8: ‘He has told you, O mortal, what is good; / and what does the Lord require of you / but to do justice, and to love kindness, / and to walk humbly with your God?’ *Indicabo tibi o homo quid sit bonum et quid Dominus quaerat a te utique facere iudicium et diligere misericordiam et sollicitum ambulare cum Deo tuo.*

<sup>530</sup> *InGen* Book 2 [5:23-24], 165.

<sup>531</sup> There is no walking explicitly noted in Cogitosus’s *Vita*. In *Vita prima*, however, there is one occasion when a young man who runs past Brigit says that he is running to the kingdom of God, in 77. Elsewhere in *Vita prima* walking is only present in an everyday context, slow and laboured, carrying a load, this is the case in 33.2 and 54.1. Additionally, everyday walking occurs in the aftermath of miracles, such as in 35.3, when after miraculous healing a cripple is able to walk.

<sup>532</sup> Muirchú, *Vita Patricii* i.23(22): *sanctum quoque Patricium claro fidei lumine radiantem et miro quodam caelestis gloriae deademate fulgentem uidens, cum inconcussa doctrinae fiducia per congruum uiae iter ambulantem.*

confidence and changed his outward countenance. Patrick walked with God, who took a protective role, and Patrick's manifestly godly demeanour was discernible to even the tyrant 'Cyclops'. Likewise, Adomnán narrated that Columba was kept safe by God as he walked with a heavenly companion. In his third book, that on angelic visitations, Adomnán recorded an occasion when Columba was in his youth and his master Uinniau noticed that an angel walked beside him.<sup>533</sup> This angelic accompaniment was primarily a visual cue to others of Columba's sanctity.

Instead of drawing on the idea of walking with God, as the Irish authors did, Bede reflected upon walking as an expression of humility. The two ideas are connected. However, the idea of walking with humility reflects the character of the saint. It sets an example and establishes a course, through virtuous behaviour, to the heavenly homeland. A commonality to the interpretation of Christian transport motifs is the echo of journeys in this life as symbolic of the greater journey of this life. Across these allegorized interpretations, God's presence with his chosen people is central. However, when land transport is engaged as a narrative tool in Northumbrian hagiography, this manifestation of God through mobility is lost. Instead, Northumbrian authors chose to use travel as a means of highlighting their saints' characteristics, or of representing strata of society.

### 2.2.2. The Meaning of Travel

Bede's HE contains anecdotes about the travel of his favourite later bishops and saints that suggest an increased need for mobility. HE provides examples of the commonplace use of horses. Bede depicted the highly praised Cuthbert travelling on

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<sup>533</sup> Adomnán, *Vita Columbae* iii.4: 'when Saint Finnio saw him coming towards him, he saw likewise an angel of the Lord, accompanying him upon his way'. *Quem cum sanctus Finnio ad se appropinquantem uidisset, angelum domini pariter eius comitem iteris uidit.*

both foot and horseback at no detriment to his humility.<sup>534</sup> When he was made bishop, Chad was given a horse by his superior, Archbishop Theodore, and made to ride over long distances.<sup>535</sup> Chad's brother Cedd was also a bishop who was described as riding as a matter of habit.<sup>536</sup> Moreover, the well-praised and later still John of Beverley was noted to have journeyed on horseback over a number of days with companions.<sup>537</sup> This all suggests that as the seventh century progressed, and into the eighth century, it became necessary for bishops to travel quickly, frequently, and over great distances on horseback. Archbishop Theodore was involved in calling councils, and initiating organizational changes and developments in the church. It is never explained how he made bishops and high-ranking clergy travel to these meetings.<sup>538</sup> It is possible that he had ensured that they were equipped with horses and made to ride. The suggestion from these details and incidents is that bishops and kings, and one might infer many more figures, both religious and secular, were riding as a part of their duties on a regular basis.

HE's most illuminating insight into the place of horse-riding is found in iv.3. Chad, whose career as a Northumbrian bishop had been entangled with Wilfrid's, was made bishop of Mercia after he had retired to Lastingham on the North York Moors. He was sent from there to Lichfield, the episcopal seat of Mercia. Whilst overseeing the See of Mercia and Lindsay, he was given fifty hides to establish a monastery in Lindsay at Barrow-upon-Humber.<sup>539</sup> Lichfield and Barrow are around 100 miles apart; they are

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<sup>534</sup> HE iv.27(25); and VCP 9.

<sup>535</sup> HE iv.3.

<sup>536</sup> HE iii.22.

<sup>537</sup> HE v.9.

<sup>538</sup> For a comprehensive discussion of church councils, including the practicalities surrounding their hosting, see Catherine Cubitt, *Anglo-Saxon Church Councils c. 650 - c. 850*, Studies in the Early History of Britain (London: Leicester University Press, 1995).

<sup>539</sup> HE iv.3.

connected by plausible routes over both water and land. Lichfield is a particularly well-connected site. It is located under three miles from the River Tame, and around six miles from the point where the Tame feeds into the River Trent. The Trent feeds into the River Humber, and by it, the locations of Chad's two key foundations during this period were connected. The courses of Roman roads also connected the two sites. Lichfield is less than three miles from Watling Street. Travelling from Lichfield, Chad could have joined Fosse Way, the Roman road heading northeast to Lincoln from Watling Street. From there he could have joined Ermine Street heading north to the point where it crossed the Humber, before following the Humber valley to Barrow.

Despite these two viable means of travelling between Lichfield and Barrow, Bede offered an indication that only land transport was considered. Archbishop Theodore appointed Chad to Lichfield. When he did so, he forced Chad to ride, and the alternative mentioned appears to have been walking:

Theodore ordered [Chad] to ride whenever he was faced with too long a journey; but Chad showed much hesitation, for he was deeply devoted to this religious exercise (i.e. walking), so the archbishop lifted him on to the horse with his own hands since he knew him to be a man of great sanctity and he determined to compel him to ride a horse when necessity arose.<sup>540</sup>

Only overland routes were placed under consideration in the narrative of this journey. Chad intended to walk, but Theodore demanded that he be more practical and ride. His enforced, or encouraged, use of equestrian transport in the narrative of Chad's first journey west is suggestive of the manner in which he was expected to travel later, and of the expectations that Theodore held regarding his bishops. It indicates that land

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<sup>540</sup> HE iv.3: *iussit eum Theodorus, ubicumque longius iter instaret, equitare, multumque renitentem, studio et amore pii laboris, ipse eum manu sua leuauit in equum; quia nimirum sanctum esse uirum conperiit, atque equo uehi, quo esset necesse, conpulit.*

routes between Mercia and Northumbria were chosen even when credible water-based alternatives were available.

A lot of Cuthbert's movement within his two prose hagiographies is narrated with neutral travel language, for example: '*circuiret* (he was going round) visiting his sheepfolds, *deuenit* (he came) to mountainous and wild regions'.<sup>541</sup> There are a few explicit details concerning his modes of transport. Consideration of these highlights a lack of narrated pedestrian transport undertaken by Cuthbert. This is despite the assertions that Bede made, that Cuthbert frequently went from the monastery to preach, 'sometimes riding on a horse, but more often going on foot'.<sup>542</sup> Neither hagiography gives an example of a single journey that he made on foot. The only reference to pedestrian transport is an episode in VCA in which he was accompanied by a boy, who walked with him.<sup>543</sup> The two *vitae* explicitly reference Cuthbert having travelled on horseback on a number of occasions. Cuthbert rode in his secular life, as is demonstrated by the episode in which on a long journey he stopped overnight in a deserted shelter and was miraculously fed.<sup>544</sup> He was also narrated riding once within ecclesiastical life: both hagiographies contain a miraculous healing carried out by Cuthbert including a reference to his equestrian riding gear.<sup>545</sup>

Despite the clear evidence for the wide-ranging presence of bishops on horseback and the clear practical importance of equestrian transport, Bede preferred to claim that his

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<sup>541</sup> VCP 32: *sua lustrando circuiret ouilia, deuenit in montana et agrestia loca*.

<sup>542</sup> VCP 9: *egressus aliquotiens equo sedens, sed sepius pedes incedens*.

<sup>543</sup> VCA ii.5: 'also having a boy in his company walking with him', *habens quoque puerum in comitatu eius secum ambulantiem*. The equivalent episode in VCP 12 does not refer to mode of transport. Bede states that Cuthbert 'left the monastery with one boy companion', *de monasterio exiret uno comite puero*.

<sup>544</sup> VCA i.6 and VCP 5. VCP 6 contains an additional reference to Cuthbert's secular horsemanship, as he arrives at Melrose on horseback.

<sup>545</sup> VCA ii.8; VCP 15. Hildmer's wife was possessed by a demon; she was healed by touching the reins of Cuthbert's horse.



favoured saints walked. It is not that these saints are frequently declared to have been out walking, but rather that in the course of their pastoral duties, he implied that pedestrian movement was the norm. In contrast to the equestrian reality, Bede made a case for his saints to have been pedestrian and thus, in these narratives, walking carried symbolic significance. Bede constructed an ideal of humbly walking that engaged with what may be an element of the practice of preaching, or, if not, with its ideal.

Humility is an important Christian virtue prescribed in scripture.<sup>546</sup> According to Bede, it is the guardian of the virtues.<sup>547</sup> By observing the virtue of humility, Bede noted that the elect ‘may deserve to be raised up by the greater grace of God’.<sup>548</sup> In justification of this, he called upon the oft-quoted Proverbs 3:34: ‘towards the scorners he is scornful, but to the humble he shows favour’.<sup>549</sup> Bede also turned to the Psalms in this rhetorical explanation of the importance of humility, stating that ‘the humble will abound with the gifts of heavenly refection’.<sup>550</sup> Walking with humility invokes the idea of walking with God, and of acting out the highest of Christian virtues. Recalling that virtues beget virtues, walking with humility is a motif that combines the *gradus humilitatis* of RB with virtuous everyday action.<sup>551</sup> The humility of saints acted as the

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<sup>546</sup> For example, Isaiah, on the Day of Reckoning, spoke of man being humbled and God alone exalted (Isaiah 2:11). Humility before God is a feature of repentance and restoration (2 Chronicles 33:10-13).

<sup>547</sup> *InEz* Book 3 [Nehemiah 3:13], 168-9: ‘we must be taught to observe humility, which is the guardian of the virtues, so that according to the precept of the wise man, the greater we are, the more we should humble ourselves in all things’, *necesse est humilitas nobis quae est custos uirtutum tenenda insinuetur ut iuxta praeceptum uiri sapientis quanto magni sumus humiliemur in omnibus*.

<sup>548</sup> *InEz* Book 3 [Nehemiah 3:13], 168.

<sup>549</sup> Proverbs 3:34: *inlusores ipse deludet et mansuetis dabit gratiam*. It is cited in both the epistles of James 4:6 and 1 Peter 5:5. after them, Bede, *InEz* Book 3 [Nehemiah 3:13], 168 stated that ‘God resists the proud, but bestows his grace on the humble’, *Deus superbis resistit humilibus autem dat gratiam*.

<sup>550</sup> *InEz* Book 3 [Nehemiah 3:13], 168: *id est humiles abundabunt donis supernae refectioni*. This is a response to Psalm 64:14 (65:13): ‘the valleys deck themselves with grain’, *valles plenae erunt frumento*.

<sup>551</sup> *Gradus humilitatis* is expressed in RB 7.10-67; it is considered to have been an innovation by the Master (RM 10:10). For a commentary, see Kardong, *Benedict’s Rule*, 139. A monk climbs the twelve steps of humility that to arrive at the perfect love of God. These steps imply progression and the use of humility within an intentional spiritual program.

exemplar for these texts' audiences and encouraged humility, and through humility, all virtues, in life not just in walking.

A warning against pretences of humility in walking can be found before the eighth century. Fragments of letters written by Gildas, the sixth-century polemical priest, survive. In discussing monastic practice, he praised those who fasted without boasting as superior to 'those who do not eat flesh or take pleasure in the food of this world, or travel in carriages or on horseback, and so regard themselves as superior to the rest of men'.<sup>552</sup> In a sixth-century British context, the idea of monastic humility on foot existed, and could be inverted. The humble, in Gildas's view, should not judge those who engaged horses and vehicles, modes of transport that were worldlier, and the choice to forsake such transport did not inherently raise one's moral character.

In the central Middle Ages, humility in walking could be undertaken by secular and religious figures, and by women as well as men. For example within Symeon of Durham's early twelfth-century *Libellus de exordio*, a healed cripple, a King, an earl, and a monastic priest all walked to express gratitude to Cuthbert.<sup>553</sup> In this context, the walkers, particularly those of high status, made specific journeys of contrition, and other acts of humility were involved. The *Libellus* temporally located all these

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<sup>552</sup> Gildas, *Epistularum Gildae Deperditarum Fragmenta*, ed. and trans. Michael Winterbottom, *The Ruin of Britain, and Other Works* (London: Phillimore, 1978). See *Fragmentum* 2, 80, 143: *quam illi qui carnem non edunt nec cibis saecularibus delectantur, neque vehiculis equisque vehuntur, et pro his quasi superiores ceteris se putantes*. Thanks go to Nick Evans for bringing this to my attention.

<sup>553</sup> Symeon of Durham, *Libellus de exordio*, ed. and trans. David W. Rollason, *Libellus De Exordio Atque Procursu Istius, Hoc Est Dunhelmensis, Ecclesie = Tract on the Origins and Progress on This the Church of Durham* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), 1-256. The secular leaders who engage in humble walking, King Cnut in iii.8, and Earl Cospatrick in iii.16. Both walk barefoot on defined short journeys of honouring Cuthbert or repenting. Cnut walked 5 miles from Garmondsway to Durham, whilst Cospatrick walked along the tidal approach to Lindisfarne. Aldwin, a priest who was always monk-like in his behaviour, walked with a pack donkey in iii.21. He journeyed to live like a monk in the places where monks of old sang and worshiped in Northumbria. A crippled Scottish woman was healed at *Wrdelau*, at the spot where Cuthbert's body had sat for three days before it had been made known that they would take it to Durham. The woman went on to make pilgrimages by foot to Rome and to Ireland in iii.3.

episodes of humble walking before the Anglo-Norman Benedictine Community was established in Durham. It may therefore reflect late Anglo-Saxon ideas about the humility of walking, passed on to Symeon and his contemporaries by the earlier Community. By contrast, in the Bedan corpus, there is no reference to barefoot journeys, penitential walking, or to those who walked in humility doing so on a specific occasion or to a particular end.<sup>554</sup> Instead, Bede presented walking as a way of life that reflected the character of the saintly clergy of Northumbria.

Bede made strong and frequent use of the trope of humility in walking. He presented an ideal walking, preaching bishop, in contrast to the details that he gave elsewhere of their riding.<sup>555</sup> Saints Aidan, Chad, Cuthbert, and Boisil were all praised for their humility in choosing to walk when preaching around their dioceses.<sup>556</sup> Aidan, founder of Lindisfarne and its first bishop,

used to travel everywhere, in town and country, not on horseback but on foot, unless compelled by urgent necessity to do otherwise, in order that, as he walked along, whenever he saw people whenever he saw people whether rich or poor, he might approach them.<sup>557</sup>

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<sup>554</sup> In fact, in *InCant* there is the suggestion that stepping in shoes is symbolic of the strengthening of faith by surrounding the faithful with good examples. *InCant* 4.31 [7:1], 196: 'now these steps are in shoes when our actions are protected by the examples of the just who have gone before us to the Lord, for shoes are made from the skins of dead animals, and when we read about the just works with which the earlier saints were clothed we too walk along the path of virtue more confidently and smoothly by imitating them', *hi autem gressus sunt in calciamentis cum idem actus nostri iustorum qui nos ad dominum praecessere muniuntur exemplis, calciamenta namque ex mortuorum pellibus animalium, cum opera iustitiae quibus priores sanctos indutos esse legimus etiam nos imitati confidentius ac mundius uiam uirtutis ingredimur*.

<sup>555</sup> Cuthbert travels on horseback, for example, in HE iv.27(25); and VCP 9, Chad does so in HE iv.3.

<sup>556</sup> Aidan in HE iii.5; Chad in HE iii.28; and Cuthbert and Boisil in HE iv.27(25), and Cuthbert in VCP 9. Bertram Colgrave asserted that this was a mark of 'Celtic' asceticism, see *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), 226, n. 2; *Two Lives*, 323.

<sup>557</sup> HE iii.5: *discurrere per cuncta et urbana et rustica loca, non equorum dorso, sed pedum incessu uectus, nisi si maior forte necessitas conpulisset, solebat; quatinus ubicumque aliquos uel diuites uel pauperes incedens aspexisset*.

Cuthbert and Boisil, the prior at Melrose whilst Cuthbert was a monk there, were jointly praised for leaving the monastery ‘sometimes on horseback but more often on foot; [Cuthbert] came to the neighbouring villages and preached the way of truth to those who had gone astray, just as Boisil had been accustomed to do in his time’.<sup>558</sup> Chad, bishop of Mercia’s, preaching was expressed in a similar way: ‘he visited cities and country districts, towns, houses, and strongholds, preaching the gospel, travelling not on horseback but on foot after the apostolic example’.<sup>559</sup> There is a recurring theme in all of these examples, that the saint chose to walk rather than to ride. This was not movement between high status named places, but more general, less specific travel that engaged with all manner of unnamed people and places: namely it was clerical and pastoral travel.

The apostolic example to which Bede pointed in praise of Chad’s actions might be a useful indication of the role of walking in Bede’s vocabulary. However, the Gospels do not explicitly back up the statement that the apostles’ means of movement was on foot. As in the Northumbrian corpus, few individuals are described as ‘walking’ or as travelling ‘by foot’ in the New Testament. There, the verb ‘*ambulo*’ (I walk) most commonly occurs as a miraculous outcome, the evidence of healing or Christ walking on the water, rather than in the context of the apostles themselves walking. That said, there are a few explicit instances of the apostles walking. For example, they walked when they interacted with Jesus on the road after his resurrection in Mark 16:12 (and Luke 24:13-18), and later in the New Testament, a number of metaphors involve

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<sup>558</sup> HE iv.27(25): *aliquoties equo sedens, sed saepius pedes incedens, circumpositas ueniebat ad uillas, et uiam ueritatis praedicabat errantibus; quod ipsum etiam Boisil suo tempore facere consueuerat.*

<sup>559</sup> HE iii.28: *oppida, rura, casas, uicos, castella propter euangelizandum, non equitando, sed apostolorum more pedibus incedendo peragere.*

walking. John gave Jesus a speech concerning faith as walking in the day and seeing the world by light.<sup>560</sup> Walking, too, was figurative for life within Paul's letters: in 2 Corinthians 12:18 and Galatians 5:16, he urged his readers that they were walking with the Spirit, and in Ephesians 5:2 he urged his reader to walk in love.<sup>561</sup> Paul further used 'walk' metaphorically in Colossians 3:7, when referring to the Colossians as previously having walked in the way of various vices and sins.<sup>562</sup> This is not to dispute that the apostles were pedestrian in their movement but to highlight that one of Bede's key exemplars of a narrative history, wherein the actors were highly mobile, often did not address movement directly. The prevalence of neutral travel language in the Gospels and Acts, like in Bede's writing, perhaps following its example, leaves various modes of transport used open to interpretation.<sup>563</sup>

The idea that Bede's saintly bishops rejected horses and chose to walk in in the manner of the apostles, along with Bede's statement regarding Aidan, that he was better placed to approach people on foot, reflect an ideal of preaching. Through walking, these bishops (and Boisil) engaged in face-to-face interactions with the people of Northumbria. It is certainly possible to sense the idea of riding a horse as raising the rider above the heads of individuals and reducing the ease of interaction. This idea of walking for preaching and pastoral work may have existed in addition to the ideal of walking humbly. The realities of clerical work required frequent travel. Priests and

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<sup>560</sup> John 11:9-10. John used this imagery again in his letters, see 1 John 1:6 and 2:11.

<sup>561</sup> 2 Corinthians 12:18: *spiritu ambulavimus*; Galatians 5:16: *spiritu ambulate*; Ephesians 5:2: *ambulate in dilectione*.

<sup>562</sup> Colossians 3:7: 'these are the ways you also once followed', *in quibus et vos ambulastis aliquando*.

<sup>563</sup> Although more about seafaring, see for example, the 'sense of journeying' achieved in Luke's narratives and particularly Acts by his 'exuberant listing of redundant place-names'. Discussed by Loveday Alexander, "Mapping Early Christianity: Acts and the Shape of Early Church History", *Interpretation* 57, no. 2 (2003): 163-73, at 171; see also "'In Journeyings Often': Voyaging in the Acts of the Apostles and in Greek Romance", in *Acts in Its Ancient Literary Context: A Classicist Looks at the Acts of the Apostles*, ed. Loveday Alexander (London: T & T Clark, 2005), 69-96.

bishops were responsible for travelling from their monastic centres to preach and baptise within all lay communities in their diocese. Bede's emphasis on these saintly bishops as an ideal example of active bishops has often been noted, particularly in relation to his reforming agenda.<sup>564</sup> However, the role of travel within clerical activity as central to a cleric's means of preaching should be highlighted as an independent feature of the early English church. The highly mobile clerical class is significant to the underlying nature of the church in Anglo-Saxon England, not just a feature of a Bedan-specific rhetoric. However, Bede appears to specifically connect the image of walking to clerical, and particularly episcopal, mobility when invoking an archetype of past, admirable behaviour.<sup>565</sup>

VW is also slight on the details of modes of land transport. Stephen's omissions regarding transport suggest that he wrote to be deliberately vague about the actualities of Wilfrid's travel. Wilfrid travelled a great deal, both abroad and within England. However, there is little suggestion of the transport that he used, particularly when he was travelling internally in England. In terms of explicit references to Wilfrid's manner of transport, Stephen noted that Wilfrid rode on two occasions. It is remarkable that a wealthy bishop such as Wilfrid, who travelled so frequently, is not noted to have owned or ridden horses more frequently. Even on the occasions when Stephen noted

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<sup>564</sup> For example, Alan Thacker placed Cuthbert's idealized behaviour within Bede's reforming agenda in "Ideal of Reform". For an overview of clerical categories and activities, see Thacker, "Priests and Pastoral Care". Scott DeGregorio further discusses the significance of good examples of episcopal authority in "Visions of Reform: Bede's Later Writings in Context", in *Bede and the Future*, ed. Faith Wallis and Peter Darby (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), 207-32; "Monasticism and Reform in Book IV of Bede's 'Ecclesiastical History of the English People'", *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 61, no. 4 (2010): 673-87; "Bede's *In Ezram Et Neemiam*".

<sup>565</sup> It is infeasible to propose that, at the time of writing HE, Bede intended his present bishops to engage in a walking ministry as he felt that the bounds of their diocese were too large for one man to effectively traverse and preach, as outlined in his *Epistola ad Ecgbertum*, §5. As his two-fold solution to this was the ordination of more priests and the sub-division of northern diocese, he may have felt that there was a future possibility for a pedestrian clergy. However, it may simply be that a nostalgic admiration drove these characterizations.

that Wilfrid rode, Stephen provided him with excuses for having been on horseback. His horses are excused early in his life as necessary for him to be well attired in the royal presence of Eanflæd, and acquired specifically to attend her.<sup>566</sup> The second occasion on which he rode occurred in the depths of his illness.<sup>567</sup> Stephen may have intended to imply that Wilfrid was put on the back of a horse only when he became ill, but that he would not have engaged in such a practice otherwise.

Perhaps Stephen omitted details regarding transport intending to suggest that Wilfrid, too, travelled with humility, or he may have sought to connect Wilfrid to the ideal bishop-type engaged in walking ministry. The lack of further explicit references to mounted transport in Stephen's narrative may be intended in the same way as Bede's explicit comments on his favoured bishops' desire to walk, despite the frequent necessity to ride that comes through the narrative of HE. Silence on the part of Stephen's narrative regarding any modes of transport allows the audience to impose whatever ideas they may need to upon Wilfrid's actions, to apply their own assumptions as to modes of transport. All the Northumbrian hagiographers were reticent to discuss in detail the means of transport with which their saints engaged. This repeated omission may reflect a difference between ideal and reality that authors easily overcome in narrative by the removal of details and a preference for neutral travel language.

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<sup>566</sup> VW 2.

<sup>567</sup> VW 56.

### 2.2.3. Vehicles and the Sick

The miraculous healings at the site of Oswald's death offer a detailed account of two forms of travel from which a couple of social implications can be drawn.

It happened that not long after his death a man was travelling on horseback past [*Maserfelth*]. The horse suddenly began to tire; next it stopped, bending its head to the ground and foaming at the mouth and then, as the pain became unbearable, it fell to the earth. The rider alighted, took off its saddlecloth, and waited to see whether it would recover or whether he would have to leave it for dead. The beast was long tortured by the agonizing pain and twisted about from place to place, until it turned over, it came upon the very spot where the famous king had fallen. Forthwith the pain ceased, and the horse stopped its frantic struggles; then, as horses do, after they have been resting, it rolled from side to side, stood up completely cured and began to crop the grass greedily.<sup>568</sup>

The rider continued to the lodge where he intended to stay:

On his arrival, he found a girl there, niece of the patron, who had long suffered from paralysis. When he heard the members of the household lamenting the girl's grievous infirmity, he told them of the place where his horse had been cured. Why need I say more? They put her in a cart, brought her to the place and laid her down there. In a short time she fell asleep and when she woke up she found that she was healed of her infirmity. She asked for water, washed her face, arranged her hair and covered her head with a linen kerchief, returning home on foot in perfect health, with those who had brought her.<sup>569</sup>

There are parallels in the horse's and the girl's recovery, each performs their natural behaviours when they are returned to their healthy state. For the horse this is noted

<sup>568</sup> HE iii.9: *Non multo post interfectionem eius exacto tempore, contigit, ut quidam equo sedens iter iuxta locum ageret illum; cuius equus subito lassescere, consistere, caput in terram declinare, spumas ex ore demittere, et, augescere dolore nimio, in terram coepit ruere. Desiluit eques, et stramine subtracto coepit expectare horam, qua aut melioratum reciperet iumentum, aut relinqueret mortuum. At ipsum diu graui dolore uexatum, cum diuersas in partes se torqueret, repente uolutando deuenit in illud loci, ubi rex memorabilis occubuit. Nec mora, quiescente dolore cessabat ab insanis membrorum motibus, et consueto equorum more, quasi post lassitudinem in diuersum latus uicissim sese uoluere, statimque exurgens quasi sanum per omnia, uirecta herbarum audius carpere coepit.*

<sup>569</sup> HE iii.9: *quo dum adueniret, inuenit puellam ibi neptem patris familias longo paralysis morbo grauata; et cum familiares domus illius de acerba puellae infirmitate ipso praesente quererentur, coepit dicere ille de loco, ubi caballus suus esset curatus. Quid multa? inponentes eam carro, duxerunt ad locum, ibidemque deposuerunt. At illa posita in loco obdormiuit parumper; et ubi euigilauit, sanata se ab illa corporis dissolutione sentiens, postulata aqua, ipsa lauit faciem, crines composuit, caput linteo cooperuit, et cum his, qui se adduxerant, sana pedibus incedendo reuersa est.*



explicitly *consueto equorum more* (as horses do), but the behaviour of the girl is strongly indicative of her godly character. Where the horse rolled and then ate with bestial greed, the girl cleansed and covered herself before enacting humility by walking thus demonstrating her worthiness to receive the healing miracle.

When it comes to the meanings applied to the form of travel, the differentiation between the girl's two modes of transport clearly indicates the extent of the healing process. It also reflects a strong connection between vehicular transport and the sick that is common to these narratives. There are three other vehicles in Bede's HE. First, there is the cart on which Oswald's bones were taken to Bardney monastery.<sup>570</sup> Secondly, Eorcenwald, bishop of London, was habitually carried on a horse-drawn litter when he was ill.<sup>571</sup> Finally, before his miraculous healing, Wilfrid was carried on a litter when he became ill in Francia.<sup>572</sup> The clear connection between these explicit references to vehicles is that they carried sick and dead persons.

The Northumbrian hagiographies corroborate this view of vehicles as suitable for the ill alone in society. Aside from Eormenburh, Ecgfrith's queen's, chariot, the only vehicles about which Stephen wrote in VW was the litter on which Wilfrid was carried when he was too ill to ride, and the chariot his body was placed in after his death.<sup>573</sup> Bede only referenced a cart once in VCP: a demonically possessed boy was brought to Lindisfarne by his father on a cart.<sup>574</sup> The episode also occurs in VCA.<sup>575</sup> Elsewhere in VCA, another invalid was brought to Lindisfarne in a cart; in this instance, it was a

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<sup>570</sup> HE iii.11.

<sup>571</sup> HE iv.6.

<sup>572</sup> HE v.19.

<sup>573</sup> Eormenburh rode in a chariot in defiance of Wilfrid in VW 34; Wilfrid was carried on a litter and then in a chariot in chapters 56 and 66 respectively.

<sup>574</sup> VCP 41.

<sup>575</sup> VCA iv.15.

paralysed boy.<sup>576</sup> Bede and the anonymous author of VCA also reference a litter, carrying a youth whom Cuthbert healed during his time preaching in more remote places.<sup>577</sup> In his HA, when Abbots Sicgfrith and Biscop were ill, ‘Sicgfrith was carried on a litter to the room where Benedict himself lay on his bed’.<sup>578</sup> Bede further referred to the horse-drawn litter on which Ceolfrith was carried during his illness on his attempted journey to Rome, the litter is also referenced in the equivalent passage in VCeol.<sup>579</sup>

These examples demonstrate a particular practicality of vehicles. However, taken collectively they indicate a motif as well as a reality, that of vehicles as an icon associated with the movement of sickly individuals. This construction within healing miracles anticipates the performance of a newly healed believer proving the extent of their healing by transforming themselves from passive to actively mobile. In cases of healing, vehicles must be described to explain the significance of standing and walking. The enactment of walking echoes Christ’s healing miracles in the gospels, such as in Matthew 9:1-8 (Mark 2:1-12, Luke 5:18-26), wherein the sight of a formerly paralysed man walking fills the watching crowd with awe and compels them to praise God. Here, the hagiographies’ audience are the crowd, and their knowledge of scripture tells them to be in awe of these saints, who, through God, have a Christ-like ability to subvert the laws of nature and perform physical miracles. The audience’s wonderment and trepidation at the feat of walking compels them to praise God.

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<sup>576</sup> VCA iv.17.

<sup>577</sup> VCA iv.5; VCP 32.

<sup>578</sup> HA 13.

<sup>579</sup> HA 22; VCeol 33.

#### 2.2.4. An Engagement with Mobility

Despite the narrative distortions of past transport use, the corpus of Northumbrian hagiographies suggests features of societal mobility practices. Transport in these narratives is rarely spiritual in itself. The figurative interpretations that Bede applied to modes of land transport in a biblical context strongly invoke the parallel between journeys on the earth and the journey of this earthly life. The Northumbrian hagiographical authors did not convey this ostentatious image of travel, in the presence of God and guided by Him to the heavenly homeland. Land travel in the Northumbrian hagiographical corpus is a means by which the early medieval engagement with travel, its meaning, and its recitation can be explored

The use of vehicles to indicate the presence of a healing miracle is a specific example of applying meaning to a mode of transport. Vehicles within the Northumbrian narrative corpus, although limited, were stylized, but their stylization did not derive from spiritual allegory. Instead, vehicles became a symbol of the illness that could be cast off upon the receipt of miraculous healing. Narrative mobility could also be an expression of status, both in relation to prestige and to the contrasting character of secular and elite travel, which acted within the narratives distinctly from the actuality of movement. Horses themselves did not tend to bear meaning; instead, their seeming ubiquity lies somewhat obscured by an interest in the expression of individuals as pedestrian, or moving in neutral terms.

The embodiment of walking was a practice that engaged with apostolic ideals and a practical facet of preaching. It also occupied a space in Bede's broader conceptualization of travel, wherein an association with pedestrian movement could represent humility. The figurative significance of pedestrian movement in Bede's

hagiographical narrative construction indicates a symbolic social significance attached to the type of travel. Further, in the example of walking, preaching bishops, an underlying facet of ministry can be seen. The picture of saintly bishops travelling the countryside, converting and teaching as they went, engages with a practicality and an ideal of preaching. This emphasizes the social meaning of movement connected to preaching. In the example of pedestrian movement in Bede's histories and hagiographies, the social response to movement emanating from Bede's monastic environment is as a conduit for preaching, and as a social indicator of humility.



## 2.3. Long-Distance Travel

The most frequently narrated journeys contained within the Northumbrian histories and hagiographies are long-distance journeys to Rome. These journeys were essential themselves, and within their narratives.<sup>580</sup> *Romanitas*, in the seventh and eighth century, expressed a complex multiplicity of meanings and metaphors. Rome existed as a physical place containing both shrines and architectural symbols of secular and ecclesiastical power.<sup>581</sup> Its significance to the western Church engaged with the various legitimacies of the papacy, liturgy, and orthodoxy.<sup>582</sup> Anglo-Saxons placed importance upon connecting with Rome in the seventh and eighth centuries due to the spectrum of *Romanitas*, and the various meanings of Rome were important tools in both spiritual and secular politics. Communication with Rome was both a way in which to keep up-to-date with changes in apostolic liturgy and doctrine, and a display of power. This might be seen in expressions of papal authority such as the pallium or papal seals on letters, or in adherences to orthodox practices in the form of tonsure, sung liturgy, or computus that reflected the ongoing practices of the Church in Rome. Spiritual power was contained and distributed through relics, and through Roman-

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<sup>580</sup> For general discussions of Rome and the Anglo-Saxons, see, for example, Wilhelm Levison, *England and the Continent in the Eighth Century*, The Ford Lectures (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1946); Henry Mayr-Harting, *The Coming of Christianity to Anglo-Saxon England*, Fabric of British History (London: B.T. Batsford, 1972); and for a more recent example, see the various essays contained within Tinti, *England and Rome*. For discussions on the importance of Rome to Bede and Wearmouth-Jarrow, see Éamonn Ó Carragáin, *The City of Rome and the World of Bede*, Jarrow Lecture (Jarrow: St Paul's Church, 1995); Anthony Smart, "Bede, Wearmouth-Jarrow and Sacred Space", *International Journal for the Study of the Christian Church* 14, no. 1 (2014): 22-40.

<sup>581</sup> Thacker, "Wilfrid, His Cult and His Biographer"; "Rome: The Pilgrim's City in the Seventh Century", in *England and Rome in the Early Middle Ages: Pilgrimage, Art, and Politics*, ed. Francesca Tinti (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014), 89-139.

<sup>582</sup> Éamonn Ó Carragáin, *Ritual and the Rood: Liturgical Images and the Old English Poems of the Dream of the Rood Tradition* (London: The British Library, 2005).

influenced architectural features. Narratives also played their part in containing and articulating the status expressed in associations with Rome.

Narratives can be an outward expression that connected people and places with Rome, engaging with and demonstrating one type of *Romanitas*, or many. Journeys to Rome as narrative features are themselves manifestations of power and claims of spiritual legitimacy. The connection between saints or monastic founders and Rome made a claim on the ecclesiastical landscape, both in the assertion of *Romanitas* and Rome's religious association with the foundation or saint. There was a role for performed narrations of journeys, as several of our travellers are noted to have told the story of their journeys to audiences of different sizes. However, this oral version of travel was distinct in purpose and form from the textual one that survives in the hagiographical record.<sup>583</sup>

Nicholas Howe proposed that the liturgical calendar, both as a historical record of faith and because of the importance of shared observances, overcame the physical distances of the Christian world.<sup>584</sup>

The Anglo-Saxon gaze looked, typically, toward the south and especially toward Rome and the Holy Land. [...] One might call it a telescopic gaze because it elided or overlooked the fact of great distance as the crow flies, it is many hundreds of miles from Canterbury to Rome, and even more from Canterbury to Jerusalem. [...] Just as *figura*, or a figurative imagination, can close great gaps of time in religious history, so narratives can close great distances.<sup>585</sup>

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<sup>583</sup> The transformation of oral 'pilgrimage' stories into written narratives in the examples of Hygeburg's *Vita Willibaldi* and Adomnán's *De Locis Sanctis* has been discussed by Ora Limor, "Pilgrims and Authors: Adomnán's *De Locis Sanctis* and Hildegarde's *Hodoeporicon Sancti Willibaldi*", *Revue Bénédictine* 114 (2004): 253-75.

<sup>584</sup> Howe, *Writing the Map*, 126.

<sup>585</sup> *Ibid.*, 79.

For Howe, the textual tradition condensed the realities of Anglo-Saxon travel, bringing the distant close. He noted that Anglo-Saxons compressed the distance between themselves and Rome by reading Roman texts, which made Rome as much a textual city as a real one.<sup>586</sup> The intersection between movement, ideas of peoples and place, and theological rooting was at the heart of writing travel.

By their frequency, narratives that describe journeys to Rome offer insight into the conceptualization of long-distance travel from Britain. Thus, this chapter considers how those who had not undertaken travel themselves understood and narrated it. It engages with the practicalities of travel as they are expressed and the emerging image of common routes. A small number of places were named and thus were featured prominently, creating this ‘telescopic’ perspective that brought Rome close to England in narrative distance. The illustration of practicalities in these texts is inconsistent. Clearly, the narrators had a better sense of how long-distance travel took place than they let on. This chapter does not seek to outline all mechanisms in place that facilitated such movement, instead presenting the narrative context of some elements that made travel possible.<sup>587</sup>

Those travellers whose engagement in long-distance journeys between Rome and Britain is described are not numerous. The primary narrated travellers were Biscop, Ceolfrith, and Wilfrid. Biscop made six journeys to Rome, five originating in Britain,

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<sup>586</sup> Ibid., 116.

<sup>587</sup> For targeted discussion of the ‘how’ and ‘why’ of travel covering the broad Anglo-Saxon period, and a chronological list of all narrated travellers between England and Rome, see Stephen Matthews, *The Road to Rome: Travel and Travellers between England and Italy in the Anglo-Saxon Centuries* (Oxford: British Archaeological Reports, 2007). Elsewhere, Ian Wood has also discussed what these narratives in particular have to say on the matter of practicalities concerning letters, guides, church canons, as well as the political complexities indicated by the journeys, see Ian N. Wood, “Northumbrians and Franks in the Age of Wilfrid”, *Northern History* 31, no. 1 (1995): 10-21, at 14-19. For further aspects of practicalities of travel, see Morris, *Journeys*, 14-18.



which Bede primarily related in HA.<sup>588</sup> Ceolfrith only reached Rome once, but made a second attempt later in life, which Bede and the anonymous author of VCeol both present.<sup>589</sup> Wilfrid made three journeys to Rome, narrated by Stephen in VW.<sup>590</sup> These are the only Northumbrian hagiographies that engage extensively with long-distance travel. In particular, the two accounts of Ceolfrith's final journey are exceptional regarding providing detailed narratives of travel, and VCeol engages with the experience of those who had travelled with Ceolfrith and returned. These Wearmouth and Jarrow hagiographies, written with an internal audience in mind, provided the members of the authors' communities, who had been physically separate from Ceolfrith when he died, with the opportunity to be present with him on his final journey through its retelling.

From amongst the Northumbrian narratives, Bede's HE provides the numerical majority of journeys and travellers, but his details are slight. Although not the first long-distance journey narrated in HE, the papal mission to Britain in the last decade of the sixth century, fronted by Augustine of Canterbury, marks the beginning of Anglo-Saxon interactions with ecclesiastical Rome.<sup>591</sup> HE also tells of the early Roman church in Britain, and its connections with Rome through Mellitus and Romanus, members of the Gregorian mission along with Augustine.<sup>592</sup> Birinus, a later

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<sup>588</sup> HA 2 narrates Biscop's first two journeys, chapter 3 his third, and chapter 4 his fourth. HA 6 and the anonymous author in VCeol 9 and 10 narrate his fifth journey. HA 9 narrates his sixth journey, while VCeol 15 touches upon it.

<sup>589</sup> For his first journey, see VCeol 9 and 10. The second journey is contained in HA 16-23, and VCeol 21-35.

<sup>590</sup> Wilfrid's first journey is contained in VW 3-6, the second in VW 25-9 and 33-4 for the return, and the third in VW 50 and 55-6 for the return. HE v.19, in which Bede summarizes Wilfrid's life drawing upon Stephen's *Vita*, narrates all three.

<sup>591</sup> HE i.23-25 narrates Augustine's journey.

<sup>592</sup> Referenced in HE ii.4 and 20 respectively.

missionary sent by Pope Honorius, ended up with the Gewisse.<sup>593</sup> Later, the English kings sent Archbishop-elect Wigheard to Rome to be consecrated.<sup>594</sup> Upon his death in Rome, the Pope sent Hadrian and Theodore to Kent to be Abbot and Archbishop respectively in Canterbury.<sup>595</sup> Bede mentioned Bishop Otfar of Worcester in passing as a traveller to Rome.<sup>596</sup> He also noted kings who retired to Rome: Cædwalla and Ine, both kings of Wessex, and Cenred and Offa, both kings of Mercia.<sup>597</sup> He likewise referenced the travels of Willibrord, the only missionary about whose long-distance journeys Bede had anything to say.<sup>598</sup>

### 2.3.1. Writing the Road to Rome

Early medieval authors did not narrate the path trodden by their saints to Rome. The selectively reported people or places along the way were significant to their audiences and to their underlying political meaning. Modern scholarship has tried to rationalize the route to Rome, suggesting that the selective naming of place in medieval texts might create an outline of the road to Rome. However, it is important to remember that medieval authors did not write for this purpose; their inclusion of details is more reflective of underlying social and political implications associated with their saints, than of how their saints travelled.

When it comes to identifying routes, the lack of itineraries dating from this period, or even detailed narratives referencing places along the way, removes any sense of specificity. Due to the ever-changing nature of politics and places of interest, it is problematic to use earlier or later itineraries as anything more than suggestions.

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<sup>593</sup> HE iii.7.

<sup>594</sup> HE iii.29, also noted in HA 3.

<sup>595</sup> HE iv.1.

<sup>596</sup> HE iv.23(21).

<sup>597</sup> HE v.7 for the former pair, and iv.12 also mentions Cædwalla's journey; HE v.19 for the latter pair.

<sup>598</sup> HE v.11.

However, an absence of written itineraries or details about the route to Rome does not indicate that the inhabitants of early medieval Britain were ignorant of how one travelled to Rome. It is reasonable to assume that people partly learned the routes from what they heard in oral narratives.<sup>599</sup> Numerous travellers are narrated as orating their journeys upon arrival at their destination.<sup>600</sup> The surviving textual narratives fulfil a different function to oral narratives, which were entertainment and connected an audience with all of the benefits of travel and awareness of the wider Christian world through the expression of an individual's personal experience. Our authors were experienced second-hand travellers, knowledgeable about different routes, and aware of distant places famed amongst travellers. This knowledge and stories of travel did not become a part of the recorded narrative tradition.

There was no single route to Rome. The narrative tradition did not reflect the complexity of routes across Europe; it created a stylized presentation of the process of journeying. Several scholars have discussed travel between Rome and England, particularly those journeys made by Wilfrid and Biscop.<sup>601</sup> These have suggested a well-trodden road. For instance, Colgrave, wrote that 'it is clear that by the end of the

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<sup>599</sup> Key in anthropological discussions of transport is movement as the intersection of meaning and place through shared cultural knowledge. Landscapes are social constructions and narratives as a form of cultural knowledge make the way through landscape clear. See, for instance, James E. Snead, "Trails of Tradition: Movement, Meaning, and Place", in *Landscapes of Movement: Trails, Paths, and Roads in Anthropological Perspective*, ed. James E. Snead, Clark L. Erickson, and J. Andrew Darling (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, 2009), 42-60. J. Andrew Darling notes that 'travel is a geographical and social phenomenon which is strangely tied to cognitive perceptions of landscape, the relationship of social spaces to physical places, and socio-cultural requirement for mobility'. See, "O'odham Trails and the Archaeology of Space", *ibid.*, 61-83, at 62.

<sup>600</sup> For example, Wilfrid recounted his journey to 'Dalfinus' in Lyon, as a son would, see VW 6. Willibald narrated the full extent of his journey to and around the Holy Land to the Pope according to Hygeberc, *Vita Willibaldi* 5. Eigel noted that Sturm related his journeys, even relatively short ones, to his companions and brethren, see *Vita Sturmi* 5.

<sup>601</sup> Bertram Colgrave, "Pilgrimages to Rome in the Seventh and Eighth Centuries", in *Studies in Language, Literature and Culture of the Middle Ages and Later*, ed. Elmer Bagby Atwood and Archibald A. Hill (Austin: University of Texas, 1969), 156-72; Wood, "Northumbrians and Franks".

seventh century the roads were well marked'.<sup>602</sup> More recently, David Pelteret presented individual travellers' routes and highlighted the effects of the shifting political landscape rather than the hard and fast road to Rome.<sup>603</sup> For Stephen Matthews, there were four distinct routes. One was the 'direct route', which he based upon the straight line of Sigeric's itinerary, from the journey the archbishop took in 990. Matthews proposed that the 'direct route' entailed crossing the sea to Quentovic, through France to cross the Jura, over the central Alps using the Great St Bernard Pass, and into Italy by Pavia.<sup>604</sup> He further proposed a 'central route', an 'easterly route', and a 'western route'.<sup>605</sup> The 'easterly route' made use of the Rhine and crossed the central Alps. The 'central route' went through northern France, Paris, the Rhône valley, and then crossed either the lower western Alps or the Sea of Liguria. Finally, the 'western route' followed the Seine, then headed to the Rhône valley via Tours, to enter Italy through the lower Alps or the Sea of Liguria.

Pelteret constructed a possible route taken by Wilfrid and Biscop from the reference to their stop in Lyon.<sup>606</sup> He proposed that once in Francia, Wilfrid and Biscop went by Abbeville to join part of the Via Agrippa, through Amiens to Dijon, then Lyon.<sup>607</sup> The line of this route is roughly that of Matthews's 'central route', although more specific.

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<sup>602</sup> Colgrave, "Pilgrimages", 166.

<sup>603</sup> David A. E. Pelteret, "Not All Roads Lead to Rome", in *England and Rome in the Early Middle Ages: Pilgrimage, Art, and Politics*, ed. Francesca Tinti (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014), 17-41.

<sup>604</sup> Matthews, *Road to Rome*, 39.

<sup>605</sup> Although it should be noted that Matthews's Appendix 1, which notes which of his proposed routes was used based on the available evidence, shows the 'central'/'western' route as the most common before the mid-eighth century. He combines his proposed 'central' and 'western' route for this, despite there being little evidence for the 'western' route via Tours, which he notes earlier in the main text, see *Road to Rome*, 40 and Appendix 1, 59-60.

<sup>606</sup> On their joint first journey to Rome, the two men travelled together as far as Lyon, both Bede and Stephen narrate this in VW 3 and HE v.19.

<sup>607</sup> Pelteret, "Not All Roads", 21.

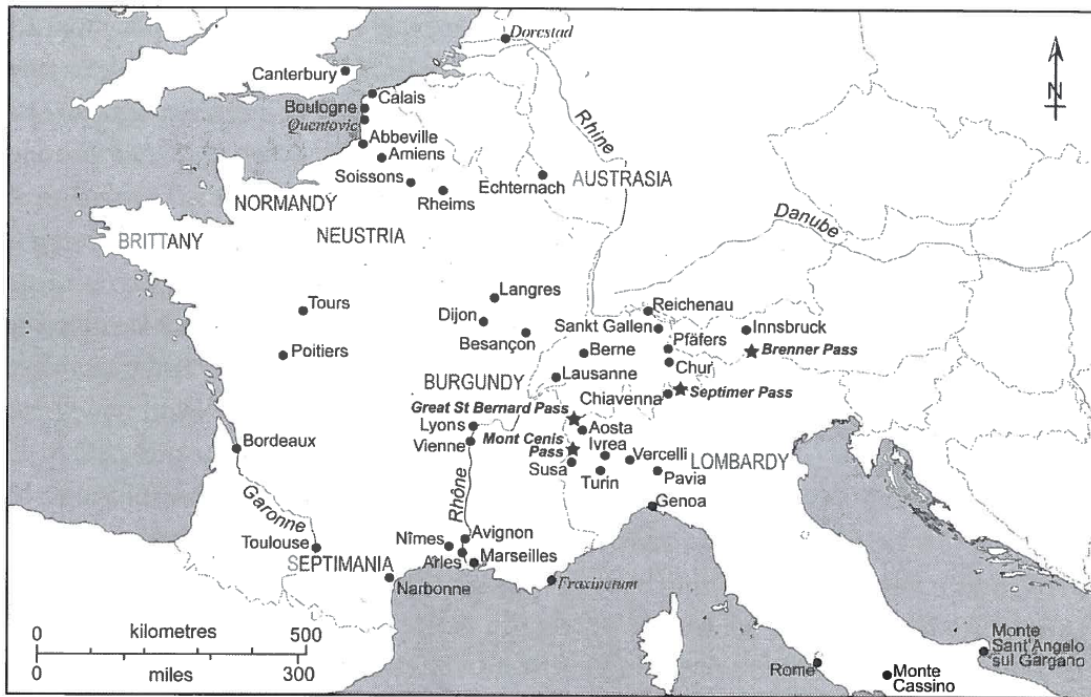


Figure 5. Map with places and rivers relevant to the crossing of Europe named, from Pelteret, “Not All Roads”, 19.

From Lyon, where Wilfrid and Biscop separated, Pelteret proposed three possible routes to Rome. Two head south, one by land and one by sea. In both cases, they start along the Rhône valley through Vienne and Avignon to Arles or Marseilles. From here, Pelteret proposed that Wilfrid and Biscop would have followed the Via Julia Augusta along the coast, using a gentle pass to Genoa, and travelled on to Rome. Alternatively, a ship could have been found in Arles or Marseilles.<sup>608</sup> Pelteret’s third proposed route between Lyon and Rome crossed over the Alps, perhaps at Mont Cenis because, although not directly attested, there is a suggestion that this pass may have been in use since the sixth century.<sup>609</sup> All three routes are possible. The travellers would have made use of local guides from Lyon, such as was explicitly stated for Wilfrid, and so

<sup>608</sup> There are other instances when Biscop is noted to have used the sea. He has a later connection to the French Mediterranean; between his second and third journeys to Rome, he lived a while in the island monastery at Lérins. When they crossed from Rome to Marseilles by boat on route to Arles, Hadrian and Theodore were being guided by Biscop, see HE iv.1. This perhaps suggests the influence of Biscop’s time at Lérins on this, the return from his third visit to Rome.

<sup>609</sup> Pelteret, “Not All Roads”, 21.

were not reliant on a wider Anglo-Saxon knowledge of the route through or around the Alps.<sup>610</sup>

This scholarly preoccupation with the routes that early medieval travellers took across Europe underlines a huge contrast between modern scholarly perspectives and medieval attitudes to writing travel. In general, the Northumbrian corpus did not narrate a route or routes. Instead, medieval authors named select places or people that were relevant or meaningful to them and to their audience. The lack of details of the journey brought Rome closer to England in narrative than it was in reality. Without clear time or places along the route, travel became short and punctuated only by an occasional stop at a meaningful destination or with a significant person. This ‘telescopic’ presentation made it easier to access Rome through these texts. It is not that the early medieval author and audience did not know about mainland Europe or the slow stop-start nature of travel.<sup>611</sup> They chose to present travel in this way. Instead of reconstructing routes, scholarship would do well to question which towns or people medieval authors selected in their narrations and to think about their significances. Places of importance are generally in Francia rather than Lombardy in these narratives,

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<sup>610</sup> VW 4: ‘Dalfinus’ provided Wilfrid ‘with guides and supplies for his journey’, *cum ducibus et opibus*. It is interesting to comment on the Alps, which were a constant obstacle for travellers between Britain and Rome. They were, for Stephen, a divider of Europe: in praising the church built at Hexham, in VW 22 he stated ‘nor have we heard of any other house on this side of the Alps built on such a scale’, *neque enim ullam domum aliam citra Alpes montes talem aedificatam audivimus*. However, traversing this mountain range is little discussed. For Wilfrid’s first journey, Stephen mentioned neither mountain crossing, nor sailing. Despite mentioning the Alps in the context of praising Hexham, Stephen did not name the mountains on the two occasions on which he noted Wilfrid’s journey across them (VW 33 and 55). Bede’s summary of Wilfrid’s life made no mention of crossing mountains. Travel around the Alps by sea was narrated even less frequently. Bede only narrated two instances of travel on the Mediterranean that seem to suggest avoiding the Alps. These are Hadrian and Theodore’s voyage from Rome to Marseilles, iv.1, and the death in the Italian Sea of Romanus, bishop of Rochester, who went to Rome to see Pope Honorius in ii.20.

<sup>611</sup> As noted above, the oral tradition of relating journeys may have featured a more practical rendition of travelling. If nothing else, the survival of itineraries from both before and after this period, along with the stylized notation of travel in the Holy Land contained in Hygeburg’s *Vita Willibaldi* and the various versions of *De Locis Sanctis*, demonstrate that travel could be conceptualized as a series of related stops.

and are therefore located closer to the English audience, suggesting that the immediate landscape of Francia was more meaningful than that of Lombardy. However, it is the more distant Burgundian cities, rather than the western cities of Neustria, that are named in these journeys to Rome, demonstrating that it was more than simple familiarity that guided authors' selections of details.

Lyon, in Burgundy, is a key location named in these narratives. Together with Vienne, its neighbour town roughly 30km away along the Rhône valley, Lyon marks a location on the plains well situated for approaching the Alps or the ports of Arles and Marseilles. Lyon was likely a stopping point on Augustine and his companions' first journey to Britain, as well as being a narrated point on two of Biscop's and one of Wilfrid's journeys to Rome.<sup>612</sup> On their joint first journey to Rome, the two men travelled together as far as Lyon.<sup>613</sup> On Biscop's fourth journey to Rome (his third from Britain), Bede noted that Biscop collected some of his possessions from friends in Vienne.<sup>614</sup> Additionally, the spiritual and political significance of these archiepiscopal cities in the Rhône valley likely made the area a prominent location concerning Frankish links with Anglo-Saxon England. The antiquity of Christianity in the Rhône valley along with its relative proximity to Rome meant cities such as these, and their clerics and monks, played the role of a proxy for Roman orthodoxy for Anglo-Saxons observing Christian practices in situ, such as was the purpose of Wilfrid's extended residency in Lyon. Further, Frankish monks and clerics from this region may well have practised in Anglo-Saxon monasteries.

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<sup>612</sup> HE i.25, Bede stated that Augustine and his companions *peruenit Brittaniam* (came to Britain). A detail of the route might be assumed from the letter included in HE i.24 to the bishop of Lyon whom Bede misidentifies as the bishop of Arles.

<sup>613</sup> Both Bede and Stephen narrated this in VW 3 and HE v.19.

<sup>614</sup> HA 4.

The only other named location in Burgundy is Langres, noted in relation to Ceolfrith's final journey.<sup>615</sup> By the death of the former abbot, Langres became instantly important to the Wearmouth and Jarrow audiences who received the two hagiographical descriptions of Ceolfrith's final journey. The presence of Ceolfrith's body, and of those amongst his companions who chose to remain with him, connected Langres to Wearmouth and Jarrow spiritually and practically. Upon Ceolfrith's death, the companions that accompanied the abbot split into three: those who returned home immediately, those who went to Rome, and those who stayed with their abbot's remains. Bede narrated this third company of individuals as staying 'by the dead man's tomb among people whose language they did not know, because of their inextinguishable devotion to their father-abbot'.<sup>616</sup> These individuals chose alienation in this life because of the circumstances that they found themselves in. The audience of these hagiographies likely knew some of these men personally, and, if they remained in Langres long-term, they reflect an on-going connection and interaction between the communities of Wearmouth and Jarrow, and those of Langres.

VCeol adds to the complexity of the relation between Wearmouth, Jarrow, and Langres. VCeol 38 notes not just that Ceolfrith's companions split into three groups, but that some of those who remained in Langres later went to Rome. Gangulf, lord of Langres, provided for the journey of those who went on to Rome and afforded an allowance to those who stayed behind. Further, some of these men may have returned to Northumbria to pass this information on, or if not maintained channels of

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<sup>615</sup> VCeol 32, 35, and 38; HA 21.

<sup>616</sup> HA 21: *ad tumbam defuncti inter eos quorum nec linguam nouerant pro inextinguibili patris affectu*. Grocock and Wood note the implausibility of the Northumbrians' failure to communicate with their hosts in Langres, in *Abbots*, 72, n. 191. The stated absence of a common tongue strengthens the conditions of alienation and deepens the image presented of the separation felt by those who had left their fatherland, and in the departure of Ceolfrith had lost their father.



communications with their original communities. If one engages with this dynamic view of Ceolfrith's followers, Wearmouth and Jarrow are connected to Langres by multiple threads originating in the death of Ceolfrith. There is a network made by the ties made with Langres by those individuals who stayed in Langres forming personal connections, and then returned, combined with the strong bond between the communities at Wearmouth and Jarrow and their abbot and the final brethren who remained.

To the south of Burgundy, and with access to the Mediterranean, are the cities of Arles and Marseilles. Bede mentioned that these were on Hadrian and Theodore's route to Britain.<sup>617</sup> These cities are prominent in Pelteret's outline of the route to Rome, but their narrative use is limited. If Lyon was significant politically and religiously in the mind of seventh- and eighth-century Anglo-Saxons, it may be that these cities to its south were remote, less frequently visited or recalled in stories and in practice. The actual practicality and significance of the port city of Arles is reflected in Bede's remark that Hadrian and Theodore were detained with the Archbishop of Arles until the mayor of Neustria, Ebroin, gave them leave to go where they pleased. However, this does not seem to impact upon their narrative significance.

From Arles, Theodore and Hadrian headed to Neustria.<sup>618</sup> Despite being the westerly-facing Frankish kingdom and home to the ports of Rouen and Quentovic, with which many Anglo-Saxons must have interacted, Neustria is less frequently included as a stopping point on journeys to and from Rome than the Burgundian Rhône valley. Whilst Theodore visited Agilbert, bishop of Paris, Hadrian went first to Emme, bishop

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<sup>617</sup> HE iv.1.

<sup>618</sup> HE iv.1.

of Sens, and then to Faro, bishop of Meaux. Meaux was mentioned on one other journey from Rome to Britain: Wilfrid's third return home. Having made his way to Francia, Wilfrid became unwell and was brought 'scarcely alive, to the town of Meaux, his comrades never doubting that he would die'.<sup>619</sup> These nearer places are not named for other journeys. Whatever their significance to the English audience, it did not play a part in narratives of the road to Rome. Hadrian and Theodore's circuit of Neustrian bishops was significant to Bede in addressing their authority, not the route that they took: their narrated continental political networking demonstrates the importance of the men that Rome had sent to do God's work in England.

The only other named location in Neustria that a traveller between Britain and Rome passed is Tours. Biscop travelled through Tours on the return from his fifth journey to Rome (his fourth from Britain). He had taken Ceolfrith with him to Rome on this occasion, and, on his return, he accompanied Abbot John, singing master of the monastery of St Martin's in Rome, to Northumbria.<sup>620</sup> They had gone via Tours because John had wanted to see it, however and importantly, this information is only given in the context of John's later burial there when he died on his return journey to Rome.<sup>621</sup> Travel through Tours was not narrated for its own sake. As with the more

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<sup>619</sup> VW 56: *ad Meldum civitatem vix vivus deducitur, nihil de morte eius dubitantes*. Bede too includes this narrative. HE v.19: 'in this way (i.e. ill and carried on a litter) he reached the city of Meaux in Gaul and there lay as if dead for four days and nights', *sic delatus in Maeldum ciuitatem Galliae quattuor diebus ac noctibus quasi mortuus iacebat*.

<sup>620</sup> Noted in HE iv.18(16): John *uenerat a Roma* (had come from Rome) under the guidance of Biscop, who had 'visited Rome [...] with Ceolfrith, his companion and fellow worker', *uenit Romam cum cooperatore ac socio eiusdem operis Ceolfrido*. VCeol 10, too, outlines this. After noting that Ceolfrith accompanied Biscop on this journey, the anonymous author goes on to state: 'they learned many church regulations there, and brought back to Britain with them John of blessed memory, head cantor of the Roman church and abbot of the monastery of the blessed Martin'. *Et ibi multa discunt ecclesiae statuta, et beatae memoriae Iohannem archicantorem Romanae ecclesiae, abbatemque monasterii beati Martini, secum Britanniam ducunt*.

<sup>621</sup> HE iv.18(16): 'because of his great affection for St Martin over whose monastery he presided, his body was taken by his friends to Tours and honourably buried there. He had been hospitably entertained by the church in that place on his way to Britain', *orpusque eius ab amicis propter amorem sancti*

northerly Neustrian cities, Tours is not significant as a staging post in these narratives of travel to Rome. Whilst the significance of Tours as a cult site, and Martin as a saint, are evidenced in Anglo-Saxon England, as a location on the narrated road to Rome it was not meaningful in the way that Lyon and the Rhône valley were.

Wilfrid did not travel through Neustria on his second journey to Rome. He went through Frisia instead, where the pagan Aldgisl gave him hospitality. Stephen narrated that Wilfrid had been planning to travel through Neustria, but that, because his persecutors waited for him there, he went east to Frisia instead. The significance of Wilfrid's time in Frisia is twofold – he laid the groundwork for later Northumbrian missionaries and his receipt of hospitality from a pagan highlights what was denied to him by Christian rulers in England and Neustria. Alan Thacker has argued that the differences in Bede and Stephen's presentations of Wilfrid stem from two contrasting positions: Bede was concerned with Wilfrid as a missionary, whilst Stephen was more concerned with emphasising Wilfrid's supra-national connections and links across Anglo-Saxon England.<sup>622</sup> In the presentation of this journey to Rome, these elements can be distilled along with the significance of people rather than places in Stephen's vision of his bishop's movement. Further, as was outlined in 1.3.2b, Stephen did not narrate Wilfrid's connections for their own sake. They are deliberate evocations of Wilfrid as a *peregrinus*, a stranger in whom Christ was more especially received. Stephen named those people who provided the hospitality; he judged them worthy of praise and made them the antithesis of Wilfrid's detractors, who in rejecting him rejected Christ.

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*Martini, cuius monasterio praeerat, Turonis delatum atque honorifice sepultum est. Nam et benigno ecclesiae illius hospitio, cum Britanniam iret.*

<sup>622</sup> Thacker, "Wilfrid, His Cult and His Biographer", 5.

The themes of *peregrini* and the receipt of hospitality continue throughout Stephen's narration of Wilfrid's second journey to Rome. Following his time in Frisia, Wilfrid went to Dagobert, king of Austrasia, whom he had supported during the king's exile in a move against Ebroin of Neustria, the political act that likely hindered his transit through Neustria.<sup>623</sup> Stephen obscured Wilfrid's route through Austrasia. All that he noted was that, after visiting Dagobert, Wilfrid and his companions 'came to Perctarit, King of "Campania", a humble and peaceful man who feared the words of God'.<sup>624</sup> Stephen noted that both kings supplied Wilfrid with guides, as did 'Dalfinus' on his first journey to Rome, demonstrating a practicality behind how Wilfrid could travel different routes safely. The people who received Wilfrid, not their places, were significant to Stephen's narrative of this journey. Stephen made clear that the treatment of Wilfrid when he was an exile reflected well on those who took in the Christ-like *peregrinus* and condemned those who rejected and persecuted him.

Wilfrid's use of multiple distinct routes is a reminder that there was not a single route by which seventh-century Anglo-Saxons travelled to Rome. Routes were flexible, thanks to the ability of high status travellers to harness local information through guides, whether as a gift from a host or as a purchased service. The places named by these texts do not provide us with enough information to outline the reality of travel. Such an outcome was not their intention, nor does it highlight incomplete geographical awareness. Instead, the narration of travel points to continental places that were meaningful to the narratives' author and audience. Stephen narrated Wilfrid's second journey in relation to people not places, because the meaning of the people was more

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<sup>623</sup> VW 28. For an outline of the politics, see Wood, "Northumbrians and Franks".

<sup>624</sup> VW 28: *pervenerunt ad Berhtherum regem Campaniae, virum humilem et quietum et trementem sermonis Dei.*

significant than their locations. Authors did not intend these written narratives of journeys to Rome to reflect the actualities of the route, and modern attempts to conceptualize the real routes to Rome suffer because of this. Instead, the named features of these journeys are indicative of political and religious significance, the interactions between Anglo-Saxons and their continental counterparts, and the expectations of audiences as to what was to be found on the road to Rome.

Two further features of the narration of travelling to Rome provide additional examples of the meanings that hagiographers applied to these journeys. First, the crossing of the North Sea, like all travel on the sea, engaged with the allegory of the sea. As an important first stage in the journey to Rome, authors could either ignore it and imply universal experiences of the sea, or play to the miraculous strengths of the allegory of the sea and the significance of God's work on it. Secondly, authors could creatively apply conceptualizations of urgency to their narratives of the road to Rome. The long and arduous journey could be transformed into a brief and immediate moment in narrative.

### 2.3.1a. Crossing the North Sea

To understand the narrative use of the sea crossing here, as above with the overall route, it is necessary to see where practical details are given precedent, and where they are rejected to make room for narrative embellishments and distortions. The sea voyage across the North Sea was neither pleasant nor reliable. A necessary part of the journey to Rome from Britain, this underrated feature invoked the allegory of the sea when it was called upon. There is no such thing as a simple Channel crossing, nor a mere narrative of one. As was discussed in Chapter 2.1, the sea figuratively was understood to be the turbulent earthly life. Miracles and narrative interactions with the

sea engage with this figurative allegory. Narratives of crossing the North Sea invoke the intensification of miraculous outcomes through the underlying awareness of the meaning of the sea.

Just as the route to Rome has been the focus of scholarship, so too is the route across the North Sea. Understanding the practicalities of sea travel is key to interpreting its meaning and significance, however, the practice of naming ports is limited within these narratives. Pelteret commented that it was likely that Anglo-Saxon sailors chose the shortest crossing. He based this assertion on the evidence of Biscop deciding to travel to Canterbury, where he met Wilfrid, rather than departing for Rome from Jarrow or Whitby.<sup>625</sup> Pelteret's use of one example where this is the case ignores the narratives in which travellers left from other departure points in England that necessitated greater sea voyages. Boniface left from London on two occasions.<sup>626</sup> Hild of Whitby desired to leave Northumbria for a Frankish monastery and so she travelled to East Anglia to await permission and travel companions.<sup>627</sup> Ceolfrith was noted as having departed from a port on the Humber.<sup>628</sup> Both Biscop and Wilfrid made use of a Quentovic-Hamwic crossing, when arriving from the Continent.<sup>629</sup> For most of our travellers across the North Sea, we do not know their point of departure, their landing place, nor their final destination by water before they travelled by land.

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<sup>625</sup> Pelteret, "Not All Roads", 18-9.

<sup>626</sup> Willibald, *Vita Bonifatii* 4 and 5.

<sup>627</sup> HE iv.23(21).

<sup>628</sup> VCeol 31 and 32.

<sup>629</sup> Ian Wood noted that this indicates the importance of Wessex and the connections that they made with the king in Wessex, see "The Continental Journeys of Wilfrid and Biscop", in *Wilfrid, Abbot, Bishop, Saint: Papers from the 1300th Anniversary Conferences*, ed. Nicholas J. Higham (Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2013), 200-11, at 202 and 206.

Broadly, three sea-routes between England and the Continent existed. One connected south-east England to northern Francia (London or Kent to Quentovic). The next linked the east coast of England to the Rhine delta (this would include Northumbrian harbours and the likes of Ipswich to Dorestad). Finally, Wessex and southern England were connected to the Seine (for example, Hamwic to Rouen for Paris).<sup>630</sup> The hagiographies do not provide good evidence for these *wics*. Quentovic is only mentioned once in HE, on Theodore's departure from Francia for Britain.<sup>631</sup> However, Bede noted that Peter, the first abbot of Canterbury's abbey, drowned in 'Amfleaf bay'. This bay is probably Ambleteuse, which is around 35km north of the mouth of the Canche.<sup>632</sup> It would seem that Peter meant to use Quentovic, the *wic* on the Canche, as his point of entry to Francia. Rouen was not mentioned in the Northumbrian corpus, although Hygeburg in *Vita Willibaldi* mentioned the Hamwic-Rouen connection as the route taken by Willibald.<sup>633</sup> Dorestad, too, was not referred to in the Northumbrian corpus. The narratives of travel to Frisia did not name places in the Low Countries. Missionaries in Frisia, including Willibrord, the two Hewalds, Wilfrid, and Wihthberht, were likely to have used the Rhine as an entry point, and it is possible that they crossed directly from a Northumbrian harbour. These are not the only viable connections, for instance Willibald of Mainz noted that Boniface travelled on a merchant ship from London to Dorestad, as well as from London to Quentovic.<sup>634</sup> However, the principal

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<sup>630</sup> Stéphane Lebecq and Alban Gautier, "Routeways between England and the Continent in the Tenth Century", in *England and the Continent in the Tenth Century: Studies in Honour of Wilhelm Levison (1876-1947)*, ed. David W. Rollason, Conrad Leyser, and Hannah Williams (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2010), 17-34, at 18.

<sup>631</sup> HE iv.1.

<sup>632</sup> HE i.33.

<sup>633</sup> Hygeberg, *Vita Willibaldi* 3.

<sup>634</sup> Willibald, *Vita Bonifatii* 4 and 5.

connections outlined above may well have been the trading routes between which ships most commonly sailed, and thus the routes on which it was easiest to find passage.

These trading sites may have been the destinations, but they were not the first and last points of contact on each side of the sea. Christopher Loveluck's model of maritime or coastally orientated communities are indicative of the role of coastal settlements in trade and contacts, and merchants would have made their way between several of these communities on their way to an intended destination.<sup>635</sup> Presumably, boats from London to Quentovic skirted the English coast until they were in the Channel before pushing out when they found divine favour, favourable winds, or had a full day ahead of themselves for travelling. Sight would have led navigation. Thus the shorter crossing would have been desirable for the better visibility. Casting out into the North Sea from a more northerly location on the eastern coast of Britain must have been an act of faith.

Overall, the evidence of where travellers landed in Francia or Frisia is limited. More usually, Bede noted that travellers simply went to 'Gaul'. Mellitus and Justus 'departed to Gaul' and messengers were sent after them.<sup>636</sup> Likewise, Biscop, whose frequent travel Bede reported in simple terms, 'crossed the seas and headed for the provinces of Gaul. He asked for, engaged, and brought back masons who could build him a church of stone [...] he sent envoys to Gaul to bring back glaziers'.<sup>637</sup> Bede had little to say regarding either the journey or the places engaged with on the route.

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<sup>635</sup> Loveluck, *Northwest Europe*. The role of maritime trade infrastructure in connecting religious travellers from Ireland with the Continent and ultimately Rome has been discussed by Loveluck and O'Sullivan, "Travel, Transport", 27; see also Wooding, "Trade as a Factor".

<sup>636</sup> HE ii.5 and 6.

<sup>637</sup> HA 5: *oceano transmisso Gallias petens, cementarios qui lapideam sibi ecclesiam [...] misit legatarios Galliam, qui utriusque factores*.



Bede's staging of North Sea crossings is different from those presented by Stephen. The authors' use of sea crossings can be compared directly in Wilfrid's series of crossings narrated by both Bede and Stephen. Stephen, although quiet about the departure and entry points, tended to make a show about the crossing itself as has been discussed in Chapter 2.1. Stephen made explicit references to the *portus salutis* that concluded Wilfrid's returns to Britain, and invoked God's aid directly, through relics, or through his complicity with Wilfrid's desires. An example of these elements is noted in Stephen's narrative of Wilfrid's first return to Northumbria, which is described thus: 'with the aid of the holy relics, and when the wind blew as the sailors wished, they made a prosperous voyage towards their own land, to a harbour of safety'.<sup>638</sup> The *portus salutis* references the journey's end as the antithesis to the turbulent sea in a manner that echoes rhetoric about the *stabilitas* of the port corresponding to the *stabilitas* of the eternal Church.<sup>639</sup> God's intervention through relics and through His support of the sailors' desired wind, whilst not miraculous, is included in the narrative to allow the audience to assume the significances of divinely approved seafaring. An awareness of the allegory of the sea underpins and intensifies the significance of these briefly described voyages. The enormous contrast between Stephen and Bede's presentations of these crossing is noticeable in this instance, as Bede said nothing of the journey; instead, he introduced the next episode in Wilfrid's story with the phrase 'on returning to Britain'.<sup>640</sup>

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638 VW 7: *reliquiarum sanctorum auxilio navem ascendens, flante vento secundum desiderium nautarum, ad regionem suam prospere in portum salutis pervenerunt.*

<sup>639</sup> As was discussed in Chapter 1.1.

<sup>640</sup> HE v.19: *at ille Britanniam ueniens.*

Concerning Wilfrid's second journey to Rome, Stephen said 'our holy bishop, with a west wind blowing gently according to his wish, and with the vessels heading eastward, came after a prosperous voyage to Friesland with all his companions'.<sup>641</sup> Bede noted only the direction of Wilfrid's travel: 'intending to go to Rome to plead his cause before the pope, [Wilfrid] embarked on a ship and was driven by the west wind to Frisia'.<sup>642</sup> Stephen's details are greater than those given by Bede; he demonstrated an understanding of the geographical position of different continental ports relative to eastern Britain, implying that specific ports were selected. He noted that Wilfrid exchanged his proposed southerly crossing for an easterly one. The voyage was prosperous, and the winds acted as Wilfrid desired. In this narrative, Stephen brought practical aspects of seafaring together with the invocation of God's approval of Wilfrid's plan. Bede's narrative, however, brings to mind an undirected ship cast to the mercy of God and the winds that arrived in Frisia by divine intervention. In this example, it is Bede's version of the narrative that more strongly invokes the divinely ordained nature of Wilfrid's voyage to, and missionary work in, Frisia.

Stephen invoked God's active influence on Wilfrid's third journey to Rome. He wrote that, on the way to Rome, Wilfrid's party was 'borne oversea by their ship, reached the southern shores, God going before them'.<sup>643</sup> Their return, following Wilfrid's recovery in Meaux, was expressed similarly. Stephen noted that 'they set out and came to the sea: they crossed its full extent by ship and, by the help of God, they found a

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<sup>641</sup> VW 26: *sanctus pontifex noster, secundum desiderium eius flante zefiro vento ab occidente temperanter, versis navium rostris ad orientem, usque dum in Freis prospere cum omnibus pervenit.*

<sup>642</sup> HE v.19: *Romamque iturus, et coram apostolico papa causam dicturus, ubi nauem conscendit, flante Fauonio pulsus est Fresiam.*

<sup>643</sup> VW 50: *vehiculo navis transportati, ad litora australia, Domino praeviante, pervenerunt.*

safe harbour in the land of Kent'.<sup>644</sup> Of this journey and return, by contrast, Bede only commented that '[Wilfrid] went to Rome',<sup>645</sup> and 'he set forward on his journey and arrived in Britain'.<sup>646</sup> Stephen emphasized God's role in aiding Wilfrid's voyage. He was concerned with safe harbourage, the antithesis of the turbulent seas, and the vastness of the sea itself. Bede said nothing. His brevity not only removed danger and the balance of life and death from the transaction, but it also detached God's role from Wilfrid's safe crossing. Stephen narrated Wilfrid's return from his second journey to Rome in a similar fashion to his third journey. He described God's help in the voyage, the vastness of the sea, and the joy of the sailors upon reaching land.<sup>647</sup> Bede, however, was uninterested, stating only 'Wilfrid returned to Britain'.<sup>648</sup>

More strongly, Bede's silence on sea voyaging contrasts with Stephen's evocative illustrations of sea travel in the narration of Wilfrid's return voyage having been consecrated bishop. Wilfrid's return, not related by Bede, is the scene of Stephen's most powerful description of the potency and treachery of sea travel:

While they were crossing the British sea on their return from Gaul with Bishop Wilfrid of blessed memory, and the priests were praising God with psalms and hymns, giving the time to the oarsmen, a violent storm arose in mid-ocean and the winds were contrary, [...] the foam-crested waves hurled them on to the land of the South Saxons which they did not know.<sup>649</sup>

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<sup>644</sup> VW 57: *coepto itinere usque ad mare pervenerunt, cuius magnitudinem navigio superantes, in Cantuaria regione portum salutis Deo adiuvante invenerunt.*

<sup>645</sup> HE v.19: *ueniensque Romam.*

<sup>646</sup> HE v.19: *coeptoque itinere Britanniam uenit.*

<sup>647</sup> VW 34: 'then, having traversed many lands, and with the help of God having passed over a great tract of sea by ship, he reached his own land unharmed, together with all his companions, to the great joy of his subjects who were languishing with weariness, and crying out to the Lord with tears'. *Deinde longa spatia terrarum peragrans, Dei adiutorio in navigio maris magnitudinem superans, illaesus cum omnibus evasit ad regionem propriam, in subditorum suorum taedio languentium et ad Dominum cum lacrimis clamantium maximum gaudium vita comite veniens.*

<sup>648</sup> HE v.19: *reuersus Britanniam.*

<sup>649</sup> VW 13: *navigantibus quoque eis de Gallia Britannicum mare cum beatae memoriae Wilfritho episcopo, canentibus clericis et psallentibus laudem Dei pro celeumate in choro, in medio mari*

Following Wilfrid and his companions' miraculous defeat of the South Saxon pagans, Stephen noted that:

Then the great bishop prayed to the Lord his God, who straightway bade the tide return before its usual hour and, while the pagans, on the coming of their king, were preparing with all their strength for a fourth battle, the sea came flowing back and covered all the shore, so that the ship was floated and made its way into the deep. They returned thanks to God for the glorious way He had honoured them, and with a south-west wind they prosperously reached a port of safety at Sandwich.<sup>650</sup>

This chapter uses the sea to show the strength of God to overcome both nature and the pagan army. Stephen presented God's hand moving Wilfrid to where He needed him. Through the transformation of the sea into that turbulent beast, the allegory for this world, controlled by God alone, Stephen presented Wilfrid's movement and action as preordained. The rhetorical significance of Wilfrid's triumph against the pagans immediately upon his consecration as bishop is emphasized by Stephen's appeal to the providential nature of the moment through the implications carried by the allegory of the sea.

In the contrast between Stephen and Bede's narration of Wilfrid's sea crossings two things emerge. First, Stephen found that the sea was a compelling, beneficial means by which to defend Wilfrid and to highlight God's on-going support for the bishop, each time intensified by the underlying nature of the allegory of the sea. Secondly, in Bede's broad quiet about the sea, one significant journey emerges from all of those that Wilfrid took: that which enabled his missionary activity amongst the Frisians. This

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*validissima tempestas exorta est et venti contrarii, [...] albescentia undarum culmina in regionem australium Saxonum, quam non noverant, proiecerunt eos.*

<sup>650</sup> VW 13: *Praeparantibus autem paganis cum rege veniente totis viribus ad quartum proelium, tunc mare redundans fluctibus tota litora implevit, elevataque nave, cimba processit in altum. Gloriose autem a Deo honorificati, gratias ei agentes, vento flante ab affrico, prospere in portum Sandwicae salutis pervenerunt.*

demonstrates the different concerns of the two authors. Where Stephen consistently defended Wilfrid against his detractors and provided evidence of his divinely approved episcopacy and actions, Bede highlighted God's missionary desires enacted through Wilfrid.

Stephen's use of the sea, its power and the security that God provided for Wilfrid differs from that of Bede. Where Bede chose not to accentuate most sea crossings, in Stephen's hands they are a prime set of actions to imbue with additional layers of meaning. They are a potent feature that can be transformed into an illustration of the divinely ordained nature of Wilfrid's life and actions. Ultimately, the eschatologically driven implication of the sea marks narratives of it and God's intervention on the sea as significant. Bede chose not to provide the same emphasis to sea crossings. Instead, he preferred to remain silent on God's interventions in most Wilfrid's travel to highlight one detail. Rather than drawing attention to Wilfrid, this aligns him with Bede's other voyaging saints.

### 2.3.1b. Perceptions of Urgency

The route to Quentovic may have been an expected, direct route. In VW 25, Wilfrid's enemies 'mindful of their misdeeds, believed that he would be sailing south to Quentovic and making his way by *via rectissima* to the Holy See'.<sup>651</sup> They planned accordingly, hoping to catch Wilfrid at Quentovic, although they failed because he took another route. There are problems with how one understands the phrase *via rectissima* (literally the 'most direct' or 'straightest' way). Stéphane Lebecq and Alban

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<sup>651</sup> VW 25: 'but the enemies of our prelate, mindful of their misdeeds, believed that he would be sailing south to *Qwoentawic* and making his way by *via rectissima* to the Holy See', *inimici vero praesulis nostri malorum suorum memores, putantes in austrum ad Qwoentawic, navigantem, ea via rectissima ad sedem apostolicam pergentem*,

Gautier used *via rectissima* as the name of the crossing from London to Quentovic based on this passage in VW.<sup>652</sup> Stephen Matthews, by contrast, proposed that *via rectissima* in this context referred to the ‘most direct route’ to Rome, rather than the sea crossing.<sup>653</sup> A literal reading of what Stephen said does seem to support Matthews’s interpretation.

As noted above, whilst the geographic knowledge of routes to Rome were likely greater than the hagiographical corpus allows us to know, travellers did not follow the same single path. In practice, it would have been a gamble on the part of Wilfrid’s persecutors to assume that Wilfrid would have taken any given route. However, Frankish controls of foreign travellers may have meant that Wilfrid could have been apprehended at whichever Neustrian port he sailed to. Quentovic may have been named because it was where Winfrith of Lichfield was stopped in Wilfrid’s place, not because it was the only port that was being monitored. The *via rectissima* is likely to be a narrative feature, at its most practical it may suggest that Neustria was the most direct kingdom to traverse on the way to Rome from England rather than indicate a specific route. The use of the term *via rectissima* does not have to mean Stephen, his audience, or Wilfrid’s enemies understood there to have been a single ‘very straight’ or ‘most direct’ route. Instead, it suggests that, in England, there was a conception of a straighter, more direct way to travel to Rome. In particular, in the context of its use, this direct way was not through Frisia. There is no reason to believe that *via rectissima* referred to any particular route.

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<sup>652</sup> Lebecq and Gautier, “Routeways”, 18.

<sup>653</sup> Matthews, *Road to Rome*, 41.

Both Ian Wood and Paul Fouracre have demonstrated that Wilfrid's dispute with the political powers in Neustria was entangled with his intrusions into the political circumstances in Francia.<sup>654</sup> Thus Wilfrid's avoidance of Neustria was probably planned. Stephen's statement that Wilfrid heard of the plot against him and changed his intentions disguised Wilfrid's political role, it also worked to cast Wilfrid as persecuted and presented both his journey and his missionary work with Aldgis as divinely ordained. Whilst Stephen may have understood there to have been a 'direct route', he used it as a rhetorical trick that he only invoked in the context of explaining the villainy of Wilfrid's persecutors and God's intended role for him.

The idea of a 'direct route' is not repeated elsewhere; however, there were other conceptualizations of quicker travel. In HA, Bede narrated that Biscop completed his second journey to Rome quickly, twice noting the speed of the voyage. After Alchfrith, son of Oswiu, had been refused permission to travel to Rome, Biscop, who was to have been his guide, 'nevertheless *confestim* (immediately) completed the journey they had begun, and returned to Rome with *festinatione* (the utmost speed) in the days of Pope Vitalianus of blessed memory'.<sup>655</sup> The reiteration of the urgency of his travel suggests that it was a feature of importance. In HE v.11, Bede also stated that Willibrord '*acceleravit* (hurried) to Rome'.<sup>656</sup> Here, Bede showed that travel could be conceptualized as quick, although the reasons for this are not clear in his narrative.

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<sup>654</sup> Paul Fouracre, "Wilfrid on the Continent", in *Wilfrid, Abbot, Bishop, Saint: Papers from the 1300th Anniversary Conferences*, ed. Nicholas J. Higham, (Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2013), 186-99; Wood, "Northumbrians and Franks"; "Continental Journeys".

<sup>655</sup> HA 2: *coeptum confestim explens iter, summa sub festinatione Romam rediit tempore beatae memoriae Vitaliani papae*.

<sup>656</sup> HE v.11: *acceleravit uenire Romam*.

One of Stephen's narratives of Wilfrid's travel is suggestive of speed, albeit in a different way. Stephen's narrative of Wilfrid's third journey to Rome took an unusual turn by comparison to that of the first two.<sup>657</sup> Making connections and receiving the support of continental authorities was a feature of the narration of Wilfrid's first two journeys to Rome. Stephen was keen to present the extensive ecclesiastical network that Wilfrid developed on his first journey to Rome. Stephen narrated Wilfrid's first journey relative to his connections with Biscop, Archbishop 'Dalfinus' of Lyon, and Archdeacon Boniface of St Peters, Rome. Stephen conceptualized the journey as a sequence of connections. Each contact was made and kept in their own location. Wilfrid made his connection with Biscop in England and lost it before they left Francia.<sup>658</sup> 'Dalfinus' was a connection made in Lyon to whom Wilfrid returned.<sup>659</sup> Wilfrid connected with Boniface solely in Rome.<sup>660</sup> The sequence of secular powers with whom Wilfrid interacted on his second journey was likewise maintained on the return from Rome.<sup>661</sup> On these two occasions, Stephen narrated that Wilfrid travelled the same route there and back, and sought to re-express his relationship with his contacts. This is plausibly a real facet of journeying, but it also emphasizes within the narrative that the third journey that Wilfrid made was different, as Stephen did not describe it in this way.

By not narrating stops along the way or people with whom he interacted, Stephen allowed the reader to understand that Wilfrid's third journey to Rome was carried out with haste. He created a sense of urgency throughout the narrative of this episode, from

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<sup>657</sup> VW 50.

<sup>658</sup> VW 3.

<sup>659</sup> VW 4 and 6.

<sup>660</sup> VW 5.

<sup>661</sup> VW 33.



the Council of Austerfield, when the bishops tried to trick Wilfrid, through to his excommunication, which persuaded him to make the journey.<sup>662</sup> When the text of Wilfrid's petition was read out at a synod, Stephen described it as written *rusticitas* (simply) due to Wilfrid's haste and urgency.<sup>663</sup> The full extent of Stephen's narrative of this journey follows:

When we learned of the wretched and lamentable calamity that had befallen us, we cried to the Lord without ceasing day and night; with fasting and tears, we poured out our prayers and supplications, together with all the congregations attached to us, until the time when the preparations were made and the party embarked with our holy bishop, and, borne oversea by their ship, reached the southern shores, God going before them. Then, making their way together on foot overland, by the help of the holy Apostles, after a long journey, they arrived safely at the Apostolic See.<sup>664</sup>

The tragic and urgent nature of the journey, rectifying a wrongful excommunication, is the focus. The emotive outpouring and supplications fill the space of more specific narrative and disguise the length of the voyage.

Bede provided an incidental detail about Wilfrid's third journey to Rome that counters Stephen's narrative and demonstrates that the expression of urgency through direct travel was a narrative device rather than a reflection of reality. In HE iii.13, discussing the widespread nature of the cult of Oswald, Bede noted that 'the most reverent Bishop Acca is accustomed to tell how, when he was on his way to Rome, he and his own

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<sup>662</sup> VW 46-49.

<sup>663</sup> VW 50: 'they urgently implored [...] that they would receive without distain [...] this account of their errand, though it should appear to be written in rustic style instead of being inscribed with urbane eloquence' *obnixè obsecrantes postulabant ut hoc illorum legationis indiculum, quamvis rusticitate magis conscriptum quam urbanitatis facundia caraxatum appareat pro sua [...] non dedignerent suscipere.*

<sup>664</sup> VW 50: *Haec miserabilis et lamentabilis ingruens calamitas a nobis comperta, ad Dominum incessabiliter die noctuque clamantes, in ieiunio et fletu cum omnibus subiectis nostris congregationibus fundentes precem orationis offerebamus, quousque parati cum sancto pontifice nostro navem ascenderunt et, vehiculo navis transportati, ad litora australia, Domino praeviante, pervenerunt. Tunc vero pedestri gressu super terram simul gradientes, sanctis auxiliantibus apostolis, salvo spatioso itinere ad apostolicam venientes sedem, praesentati adstiterunt.*

Bishop Wilfrid stayed with the saintly Willibrord, archbishop of the Frisians'.<sup>665</sup> Willibrord was active in Frisia from the 690s and founded his monastery in Echternach in 698. Wilfrid and Acca must have spent time with Willibrord in 703-4; this may have been in Frisia, around Utrecht, or in Echternach, Austrasia. In either case, this third journey was not different in practice from the earlier ones. It only differed in narrative. Stephen wanted to present it as swift and direct despite the reality involving time spent residing as a guest in receipt of hospitality in cities around Europe. If Wilfrid spent time in Frisia again, he certainly was not taking the swiftest route. Likewise, his possible deviation to Echternach is a substantial departure from the routes that Wilfrid knew earlier in his life. He would have taken a more northerly through Austrasia than either the route following roughly the Seine and Rhône valley, or the 'direct route' that Matthews proposed. If Wilfrid's tendency to revisit the same people and places on his return journey was a feature of his third journey to Rome, then one can suggest that he was in Meaux before Echternach (if he travelled through Frisia, then this trip was one on which he did not return by the same means). Either projected visit to Willibrord was a substantial diversion on a journey that Stephen presented as urgent and speedily undertaken.

The only information that Stephen gave is that once Wilfrid and his companions were 'borne oversea by their ship [they] reached the southern shores'; they then made their way to Rome on foot.<sup>666</sup> 'Southern shores' seems an awkward way to describe the Frisian coast. Frisia might be the southern shore of the North Sea, but it is the most

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<sup>665</sup> HE iii.13: *reuerentissimus antistes Acca solet referre, quia, cum Romam uadens, apud sanctissimum Fresonum gentis archiepiscopum Uilbrordum cum suo antistite Uilfrido moraretur*. HE and VW narratives confirm that Acca was present on Wilfrid's third journey to Rome. He is reported to have been Wilfrid's chaplain, on whom he calls after his miraculous healing in VW 56, HE v.19; and his time in Rome with Wilfrid is mentioned in HE v.20.

<sup>666</sup> VW 50: *vehiculo navis transportati, ad litora australia*.

northerly point on the Continent to which our travellers sailed. There is no sense from these texts that there was any idea of the ‘North Sea’ as a unit continuing north. Earlier, Stephen described the sailing to Frisia as easterly and that to Neustria as southerly, reflecting the real position of these locations relative to wherever on the east of England it was from which Wilfrid sailed.<sup>667</sup> In all of these discussions of sea crossings, Stephen appears to have a good sense of the reality of direction. Thus a reference to ‘southern shores’ would seem imply that Wilfrid’s sailing was directed toward Neustria.<sup>668</sup>

Stephen deliberately created the sense of a quick and direct journey when we know that Wilfrid was diverted. Whatever the realities of travel, Stephen wrote the third journey to Rome in deliberate contrast the first two. Narratives of travel were rooted in plot rather than a straightforward depiction of the reality of moving. This episode highlights that it could be narrationally useful to conceptualize a quicker route to Rome. Early medieval authors distorted the road to Rome as it suited their narratives. The creation of a hurried journey, the idea of a direct route, the spiritualization of the sea crossing, and the decision not to outline every stopping point along the wayside all remove the modern audience from the reality of early medieval travel. However, for the medieval audience, the selective reporting of travel was significant. In addition to seeking the best medieval routes across the European continent, scholarship should

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<sup>667</sup> VW 25: ‘mindful of their misdeeds, believed that he would be sailing south to Quentovic and making his way by *via rectissima* to the Holy See’, *inimici vero praesulis nostri malorum suorum memores, putantes in austrum ad Qwoentawic, navigantem, ea via rectissima ad sedem apostolicam pergentem*. 26: ‘with a west wind blowing gently according to his wish, and with the vessels heading eastward, came after a prosperous voyage to Friesland with all his companions’, *secundum desiderium eius flante zefiro vento ab occidente temperanter, versis navium rostris ad orientem, usque dum in Freis prospere cum omnibus pervenit*.

<sup>668</sup> Of course, it may be that, as with his invocation of *via rectissima*, this was a facet of Stephen’s skilful composition in creating the sense of hurried, purposeful, and direct travel equated with a route that went through Neustria.

seek to understand what motivated medieval authors in the construction of their narratives.

### 2.3.2. Purposeful Practicalities

At a suitable time in the summer they were ready and prepared. Taking with them the necessary money for the journey and accompanied by a band of friends, they came to a place, which was known by the ancient name of Hamblemouth, near the port of Hamwih. Shortly afterwards they embarked on a ship. When the captain of the swift-sailing ship had taken their fares, they sailed, with the west wind blowing and a high sea running, amidst the shouting of sailors and the creaking of oars. [...] pitching their tents on the banks of the river Seine, they encamped near the city which is called Rouen, where there is a market.<sup>669</sup>

Far more than any of the Northumbrian narratives, Hygeburg's *Vita Willibaldi* sets the scene for what was required for a long journey. Here, in one passage, is evidence for large group travel, fares paid, the use of tents, and travel between *wics*. As much as these details attract our attention now, Northumbrian hagiographical writers tended to ignore them. Those details that are contained tend to serve a narrative purpose. It is stimulating, therefore, to consider why Hygeburg did include these departing details, as the rest of Willibald of Eichstätt's journey to Rome is passed briefly with mention of 'Gorthonicum', the death of his father in Lucca, and crossing the Apennines.<sup>670</sup> While this journey to Rome contains more detail than many Northumbrian narratives, it is in the same vein, expressing few select places and closing the narrative distance. Hygeburg had made the journey from England to the Continent to join the mission at

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<sup>669</sup> Hygeburg, *Vita Willibaldi* 3: *congrua estatis tempore prumpti ac parati, sumpturis secum vitaeque stipendiis, cum collegum cetu comitantes ad loca venerunt destinata que prisco dicitur vocabulo Hamel-ea-mutha, iuxta illa mercimonio que dicitur Ham-wih; et non multo transacto temporis intercapidine et navigio parata, nautus ille cum classis suoque nauclerio, naulo inpenso, circio flante, ponte pollente, remigiis crepitantis, classis clamantibus, celocem ascenderunt. [...] et tentoria fixerunt in ripa fluminis que nuncupatur Sigone, iuxta urbe que vocatur Rotum.*

<sup>670</sup> Hygeburg, *Vita Willibaldi* 3. Even in Chapter 4, and Willibald's journey to and around the Holy Land, Hygeburg mainly names places and describes events that took place at them rather than describing the practicalities of the journey itself, which marks this particularly detailed passage as exceptional.

Heidenheim, and as such would have had her own personal experience of that same crossing, as would the other Anglo-Saxons involved in the mission who had not made the journey to Rome (or the Holy Land) themselves. Perhaps the real shared experience of these recognisable details made it easier for an audience to engage with and share in the wider-ranging travel as the narrative progressed out of the familiar and into the alien landscape beyond Italy.

Elsewhere, the inclusion of narrative details outlining practicalities tends to fall into the category of incidental details. Stephen's narration of Wilfrid's second journey to Rome highlights some practicalities of travel.<sup>671</sup> Hospitality is a central focus of the narration of this journey.<sup>672</sup> Alongside the significance of hospitality, Stephen's comments about it VW also highlight accompanying practicalities of travel. At this time, Wilfrid was escaping from secular persecution at home. The persecution followed him onto the Continent. Stephen narrated that Wilfrid's enemies in Britain reached out to the Frankish King Theoderic III, and to Ebroin of Neustria.<sup>673</sup> They requested that Wilfrid was robbed or refused hospitality. To be robbed would reduce one's ability to move as a high-status traveller. Wealth would have been required to purchase goods and services along the route.<sup>674</sup> However, wealth does not solely relate to coinage and weights of metals. Gift exchange made and maintained interpersonal

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<sup>671</sup> Paul Fouracre argues for the ultimately plausible nature of what Stephen says about Wilfrid's second journey, "Wilfrid", 194-7. He identifies areas where continental sources corroborate aspects of Stephen's narrative, and argues that VW provides a plausible historical context in which Wilfrid was known to the Neustro-Burgundian elite, and was an influential political actor.

<sup>672</sup> For the significance of hospitality to *peregrini*, see 1.3.2 and 1.3.2b; the three examples of hospitality that Wilfrid received on his second journey to Rome are also symbolic tales of loyalty that serve to emphasize the villainy of Wilfrid's persecutors, see Wood, "Continental Journeys", 206-8.

<sup>673</sup> VW 25.

<sup>674</sup> For a discussion of some of the 'costs' of travel, see Matthews, *Road to Rome*, 33-6. He only discusses the use of money and finance to buy goods and services along the route, but does not refer to the use of wealth in relation to exchange, prestige, and hospitality.

networks. The traveller gave gifts to those from whom he intended to receive hospitality, as is narrated explicitly in VCeol.<sup>675</sup> To be robbed on the road would remove the traveller's ability to exchange with those continental authorities from whom hospitality was required. It would remove the ability for the traveller to pay for a guide. Additionally, it might result in the loss of letters or other physical evidence of identity and the commendation and endorsement of kings or bishops that demonstrated the right to travel and provided access to another's interpersonal network. The high-status traveller would be left without protection on the road. Here the realities of hospitality come up against the symbolism of hospitality. Within early medieval hagiography and society, both were important.

The wealth required to travel is the subject of inconsistent discussion in the Northumbrian corpus. It was evidently necessary for travel, but our authors did not address it directly. There is little insight into how a non-elite individual might finance travel. The most revealing comment comes from VCeol, in which the anonymous author commented in praise of Ceolfrith's generosity and compassion as a benefactor of the poor. 'For he himself had instructed his servants that if they found that any of his travelling companions had no food, they were immediately to give him some food or money for it'.<sup>676</sup> Presumably, the suggestion here is that amongst Ceolfrith's company of eighty, there were men who had to pay their own way on the journey to Rome, and some would run out of wealth on the road. It is not clear whether this is because they lacked appropriate funds to travel the full route without obtaining

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<sup>675</sup> VC 32: 'he was magnificently honoured in those regions by everyone, and especially by King Chilperic himself, who accepted the gifts he brought', *et illis in partibus magnifice ab uniuersis, maxime ab ipso rege Hilperico honoratus est, qui exceptis donis quae obtulit.*

<sup>676</sup> VCeol 34: *nam et ipse suis praeceperat ministris ut si quem de comitantibus se alimentum non habere comperissent, confestim ei uel cibum uel pretium darent.*

additional wealth along with way or were subject to robbery. Either way, it seems that his companions were responsible for providing for themselves on the road. Earlier in VCeol, the anonymous author had commented upon Ceolfrith's preparation. He was noted to have 'arranged the gifts which were to be taken for the blessed Peter, and secured enough provisions needed for such a great journey'.<sup>677</sup> While there seems to be an underlying understanding on the part of the anonymous author that Ceolfrith's companions were ultimately responsible for themselves, the author is concerned with presenting the abbot's fatherly role as a provider to his companions even after he has left the monastery. This narrative was written not long after Ceolfrith's death for the monks that he had left behind, therefore this focus on provisions and Ceolfrith's fatherly character reflects back to his role in their lives. It may also reflect the need for the direct experiences of those amongst Ceolfrith's returning companions, who received his money or food, to be contained in the narrative as they shared their journey (as well as that of Ceolfrith) with the brethren who remained behind. The experiences of those who were present on Ceolfrith's journey are unique to VCeol, indicating that included within its composition was a need to make certain details of the journey known, so that, in sharing the journey by reading or hearing about it, it was made more tangible or personal.<sup>678</sup>

On Ceolfrith's last journey, the anonymous author stated that Chilperic II, king of Neustria, accepted the gifts that Ceolfrith brought. In return, Ceolfrith was given letters for the transit of all provinces of his kingdom, so that he should be received in peace

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<sup>677</sup> VCeol 22: *ordinavit et munera quae beato Petro essent referenda, sufficienter ea quae tanto itineri essent necessaria procuravit.*

<sup>678</sup> Grocock and Wood, *Abbots*, lxvi, note that the vivid details of VCeol 31-5 appear to be based on eyewitnesses.

everywhere and that no one should charge him tolls for his journey. Additionally, Chilperic commended him to Liutprand, king of the Lombards.<sup>679</sup> Here is an elucidation of the process of hospitality and endorsement. By presenting gifts, the high-status traveller used his wealth to ensure support, hospitality, and recommendation. Endorsements, in the form of letters or guides, permitted the high-status traveller to move across the kingdom. In this case, Chilperic's endorsement extended beyond the Frankish kingdoms into Lombardy. Again, this description is only in VCeol, and not in Bede's version of events. The anonymous author presented more details and made the illustration of Ceolfrið's final days more vivid, the clarity of details in the narrative surely took the audience along on the journey more convincingly.

Those details that were included may provide insight into which narratives sought to create a particular communion between the audience and the traveller. The anonymous author of VCeol, like Hygeburg writing details into Willibald's Channel crossing in *Vita Willibaldi*, wrote to include the experiences of the text's audience and to bring that audience along on the remainder of the journey. The passing of a journey without any details is suggestive that the travel itself was not under scrutiny; it did not contribute to the narrative nor to the audience's appreciation of the traveller.

### 2.3.3. A Meaningful Journey

When journeys transposed from travelled to personal oral accounts then to textual narratives, they lost places that were not meaningful. The by-product of this was that the presentation of the journey to Rome was contracted. Thus Rome appeared closer in narrative than it was in reality. This made narratives easier to follow and ensured

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<sup>679</sup> VCeol 32.



that any links made along the way were within the audience's frame of reference, not distracting them from reaching Rome and experiencing the next event with the traveller. The counter to this might be those narratives of travels in the Holy Land, *De Locis Sanctis* and *Vita Willibaldi*. In both cases, the focus was specifically on describing distant features for the benefit of the audience who was physically removed from the holy places of Palestine.<sup>680</sup> However, even in these narratives, the authors were not motivated to describe travelling itself, instead, attention was given to naming places in the Holy Land for their scriptural relevance.

Travel is only one of many narrative features. However, it is important to note the many ways in which early medieval authors manipulated movement to highlight significant narrative moments, to connect their text to underlying concepts, or to express an idea alternate from the simple moving of their saint from one place to the next. For Stephen, crossing the North Sea or the Channel was an opportunity to provide evidence of God's divine intentions for Wilfrid. By contrast, Bede removed details of Wilfrid's crossings, and in doing so highlighted the one voyage for which he provided information, that which preceded Wilfrid's missionary work in Frisia. Both authors harnessed the allegory of the sea to emphasize and intensify the providential nature of God's movement of his saint across water.

Details concerning the practicalities sought to connect the experiences of the audience with that of the narrated traveller, and so allow the audience to share more fully in the traveller's foreign experiences of the extraordinary. The elaborations that the anonymous author of *VCeol* made regarding the details of Ceolfrith's final journey

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<sup>680</sup> The meaning and purpose of descriptions of the Holy Land is discussed in Chapter 3.2.

demonstrate this. This exceptionally detailed outline of travel exceeds the precedent set by the other narratives studied in the corpus because of its author's intention to bring the brethren left behind to Ceolfrith.

Mobility was an integral facet of life for the authors of these texts, but the practicalities, routes, and details are rare and specific. It must be remembered that the narration of travel did not equate with its practice. The absence of travel narratives, itineraries, and details take the emphasis of these narratives away from the journey and movement. Instead, the narratives point to the aims, outcomes, and in particular the significant events that happened in places. Despite this, there is a clear sense that travel could be conceptualized as direct or indirect, quick or slow, and there was the possibility for a direct, straightforward route. For audiences, the 'direct route' was a conceptual shorthand, not a literal phenomenon. It is clear that in addition to anything resembling a 'direct route', there was a multiplicity of possibilities influenced by the changing realities of politics and personalities.



PART 3:

THE EXPERIENCE OF  
MOBILITY



### 3.1. In a Devotional Landscape

This final summative part of the thesis draws together some of the key themes upon which early medieval narratives drew. The narrative meaning of travel dealt with in Part 2 is re-connected to the social, and particularly religious, role of travel in early medieval Northumbria. Through a pair of case studies, each of which engages with a textual experience of mobility and place, the broader implications of narrated travel are illuminated. Here, then, we go beyond narrated travel alone to consider implicitly narrated travel. This will highlight how the narration of certain aspects of travel illuminate the wider role of mobility practices and the organizations that sought to control and influence that mobility.

Mobilities as an approach seeks to appreciate society and people as inherently mobile, rather than solely seeing travel as an extraordinary action between special places framed by periods of prolonged fixity.<sup>681</sup> The consideration of travel to and around *loca sancta*, therefore, ought to tread a careful balance. Although one values the unusual and special moments associated with visiting holy places, they are transformed into a platform for the ways that a broad conceptualization of underlying mobility helps to inform the interpretation of early medieval society. *Loca sancta* themselves are fixed, and scholarship into them is inevitably place orientated. This chapter considers the narration of mobile practices and the conceptualization of travel in the presence of holy places. This illuminates the inherent mobility in the conceptualization of *loca sancta*. Holy places exist within geographical landscapes but

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<sup>681</sup> The Mobilities approach is outlined above in 0.3.2a.

such places are the focal points for movement, their meaning and purpose is inherently connected to the mobility of those who visit them.

It must be noted that early medieval authors did not particularly describe travel to and around shrines and other holy places.<sup>682</sup> Our understanding of ritual piety in the footsteps of the saints is constructed rather than narrated. This chapter examines divinely influenced moments in the presence of *loca sancta* in relation to the underlying practices of mobility at the core of society, and of this thesis.

The central example at the heart of this chapter is the transformation of the devotional landscape on Lindisfarne, as VCA and VCP portray it. This landscape is narrated as one in which the visitor was welcome. Between the writing of the two hagiographies, the sacred landscape and mediation of access to it were formalized. The direct narration of the movements of miracle seekers on Lindisfarne illuminates the implicit mobile practices encouraged and supported by the community there. Interwoven between the narrated and implied travel is a greater sense of the mobile landscape of early medieval Northumbria.

### 3.1.1. Ritualized Movement

Before exploring the changes that the Lindisfarne community made to the form and concept of their devotional landscape between the production of VCA and VCP, it is necessary to think about what is known of devotional movement. Scholarship has constructed a reading of movement around, and the use of, ritual landscapes with

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<sup>682</sup> Even in the case of Willibald, whose hagiography, *Vita Willibaldi*, is explicitly concerned with the narration of travel around the holy sites of the Levant, Hygeburg's narrative descriptions of movement tend to neutral expressions of travel. She most frequently described that Willibald and his companions *pergebant inde et veniebant ad* (departed from and came to) or used one or other of these verbs on their own to note their movement. Additionally, there are occasional references to walking (*ambulare*) as well as the various sailings (*navigare*) across stretches of the Mediterranean. Concerning devotional activity, Willibald is noted praying (*orans*) in a number of churches but Hygeburg did not outline any specifically devotional movement or the actuality of any of the rituals performed in the Holy Land.

reference to parallel and later contexts. A devotional landscape implies mobility. A developing landscape for devotional visitors means that the experience of moving in and around that place is rendered to a wider and wider audience, its significance carries meaning outside of the direct community. The image of ritualized movement to and around shrines remains vague: it happened but we can only access details tangential to it.

There is an absence of evidence for the kinds of activities that took place at local shrines and holy places in an Anglo-Saxon context, including mobility to and around them.<sup>683</sup> However, in an Irish context, there have been a number of explorations of early medieval pilgrimage circuits. The best constructed example of devotional movements is that explored by Tomás Ó Carragáin in the archaeology of the island monastery of Inishmurray. In an Irish context, *an turas*, the ‘pilgrimage round’, followed a designated pattern around the satellite monuments within the wider monastic complex. These monuments often included a *leacht*, a drystone altar.<sup>684</sup> Michael Herity has argued that the *leachta*, and thus the associated ritual practices, are early medieval based on the artistic style on the cross slabs. Excavations of the contexts of various *leachta* on Inishmurray have produced dating evidence for their establishment between the eighth and tenth centuries.<sup>685</sup> The monuments have not changed, but the associated rituals have.<sup>686</sup> Tomás Ó Carragáin proposes that, as the

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<sup>683</sup> This has been noted for example by Helen Gittos, *Liturgy, Architecture, and Sacred Places in Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 15-16.

<sup>684</sup> See Tomás Ó Carragáin, “The Saint and the Sacred Centre: The Early Medieval Pilgrimage Landscape of Inishmurray”, in *The Archaeology of the Early Medieval Celtic Churches*, ed. Nancy Edwards (Leeds: Maney Publishing, 2009), 207-26.

<sup>685</sup> Michael Herity, “The Antiquity of *an Turas* (the Pilgrimage Round) in Ireland”, in *Lateinische Kultur Im VIII. Jahrhundert. Traube-Gedenkschrift* ed. Walter Berschin and Albert Lehner (St Ottilien: EOS Verl, 1989), 95-143; Ó Carragáin, “The Saint and the Sacred Centre”.

<sup>686</sup> For example Tomás Ó Carragáin notes that medieval monastic communities likely led communal rituals accompanied by psalms and litanies, which are not a feature of the modern practice, whilst the



*leachta* carry the same artistic motif as altar-tops, the medieval circuits probably included the celebration of the Eucharist to mark certain feast days. He also identifies that the shrines may have had specific associations with events in the local saint's life, proposing that performative rituals at these various places would have preserved important ideas about the saint over a long period for the communal audience of participants.<sup>687</sup> Liturgical processions on feast days attracted local and regional visitors, and the circuit was designed to ingrain the life and events of the saint within the memory of the community at Inishmurray and its visitors.

The best understood early medieval processional movement around holy places is the stationary liturgy in Rome.<sup>688</sup> This is the practice of the Pope celebrating mass at different churches throughout the city of Rome each day, beginning with a procession from the Lateran Palace. Liturgical processions between multiple churches operated from the sixth century alongside stationary organizational practices, bringing liturgy into the urban arena and to a wide audience. Anglo-Saxons were interested in the Roman stations; lists of Roman stationary churches survive from the seventh or early eighth century and there is evidence of Roman processions influencing Northumbrian practice in the details of Ceolfrith's processional farewell before he left for his final journey to Rome.<sup>689</sup> Bede's HA records the order and ritual activities at and between

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*Ave* features prominently in the modern ritual but is not attested before the eleventh century, see "The Saint and the Sacred Centre", 212.

<sup>687</sup> Ibid., 214-17.

<sup>688</sup> For the classic study, see John F. Baldovin, *The Urban Character of Christian Worship: The Origins, Development, and Meaning of Stationary Liturgy*, *Orientalia Christiana Analecta* (Roma: Pontificium Institutum Studiorum Orientalium, 1987), 143-66 for the developing character of Roman stationary liturgy. Another form of devotional movement around Rome is indicated in the texts of itineraries of pilgrim sites around the city of Rome and collections of epitaphs from the tombs of Roman apostles and martyrs, these are discussed by Alan Thacker, "Rome of the Martyrs: Saints, Cults and Relics, Fourth to Seventh Centuries", in *Roma Felix: Formation and Reflections of Medieval Rome*, ed. Éamonn Ó Carragáin and Carol L. Neuman de Vegvar (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 13-49.

<sup>689</sup> For Ceolfrith's procession, see Ó Carragáin, *City of Rome*, 11-13. Various Anglo-Saxon interactions with stationary liturgies have been noted, for instance, Ó Carragáin illuminates the Anglo-Saxon

each Roman shrine maintained by the communities of Wearmouth and Jarrow that Ceolfrith performed in Northumbria with the hope of participating in the same processional actions once he came to Rome.<sup>690</sup> The Roman stations experienced in Northumbria allowed those at Wearmouth and Jarrow and elsewhere to discover the routes between Rome's shrines for themselves and to connect their experience with that of members of the Church at large.<sup>691</sup>

HA's record of Ceolfrith's processional performance at his departure from Wearmouth is noteworthy in its levels of details. Elsewhere in Northumbrian hagiography, details that suggest the practice of visiting a saint's places, or the shrines of a monastic complex after the receipt of a miracle suggest similar ritualized movements were occurring more widely. This is a form of localized ritual mobility that demonstrates the widespread nature of such movement. However, hagiographies usually overlook the details, and scholars are left to assume the extent and elaborations of ritual progressions around shrines.

Even in the case of Wilfrid's actions in Rome, the narration of devotional movement was limited.<sup>692</sup> Whilst he was in Rome, Wilfrid made frequent *circumeuntes*

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conceptualization of stationary liturgies in relation to symbolic pilgrimage to Jerusalem in the Lenten liturgies, through his discussion of the imagery depicted on the Ruthwell Cross, see *Ritual and the Rood*, 148-50. Wilfrid's interaction with developments in stationary liturgy on his third visit to Rome is discussed by Éamonn Ó Carragáin and Alan Thacker, "Wilfrid in Rome", in *Wilfrid, Abbot, Bishop, Saint: Papers from the 1300th Anniversary Conferences*, ed. Nicholas J. Higham (Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2013), 212-30, at 225-7. Gittos discusses stationary liturgies as a pre-cursor to open-air processions in later Anglo-Saxon England, *Liturgy, Architecture*, 105-10.

<sup>690</sup> Ceolfrith made prayers to Mary, Peter and Laurence in HA 17, VCeol 25; discussed by Ó Carragáin, *City of Rome*, 12-13.

<sup>691</sup> Ó Carragáin, *City of Rome*, 9-12.

<sup>692</sup> Despite the absence of Northumbrian narratives of devotional movement around Rome, other textual sources provide evidence for the recreation of processional routes and the identification of the churches and shrines that were significant to Anglo-Saxon visitors in general, and Wilfrid in particular. Scholarship based on the itineraries of Roman cult sites, and papal and Lombard investment in particular saints and rituals creates a rich picture of the types of devotional activities that a visitor to the city would have undertaken and highlights the importance of mobility in devotional rituals. See for example, Ó

(travellings around) of the shrines of the martyrs. However, across all of his journeys to Rome, Stephen said no more than this one word concerning the practice of how Wilfrid visited the *loca sancta* or his movement around shrines. Stephen described the full extent of his initial devotional practices thus:

In the oratory dedicated to St Andrew the Apostle, he humbly knelt before the altar above which the four gospels had been placed, and besought the Apostle, in the name of the Lord God for whom he suffered, that the Lord, by his intercession, would grant him a ready mind both to read and to teach the words of the Gospels among the nations. And thus it came to pass as many bear witness. For, during the course of his daily *circumiens* the shrines of the saints to pray, a custom which he observed for many months, he met a teacher whom God and the Apostle made his faithful friend.<sup>693</sup>

He focussed his narrative on Wilfrid's discipline and the regularity of his dedications. There is nothing about his movement to shrines, or how Stephen conceptualized that ritual movement. Wilfrid's time and activities in Rome concluded each visit with a description of his collection of relics.<sup>694</sup> At the end of Wilfrid's second journey to Rome, Stephen noted that Wilfrid had 'spent several days *circumiens* the shrines of the saints to pray there; he also obtained from chosen men a great many holy relics, for the edification of the churches of Britain'.<sup>695</sup> Stephen described the devotional activity of Wilfrid's third visit similarly, only in relation to his departure from Rome:

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Carragáin and Thacker, "Wilfrid in Rome"; Thacker, "Rome of the Martyrs"; and "Rome: The Pilgrim's City".

<sup>693</sup> VW 5: *in oratorio sancto Andreae apostolo dedicato ante altare, supra cuius summitatem nil euangelia posita erant, humiliter genuflectens, adiuravit in nomine Domini Dei apostolum, pro quo passus est, ut pro sua intercessione Dominus ei legendi ingenium et docendi in gentibus eloquentiam euangeliorum concedisset. Et sic factum est, ut multorum testimonio comprobatur. Nam per multos menses loca sanctorum omni die ad orationem circumiens, invenit doctorem, sibi amicum per Deum et apostolum fidelem factum.*

<sup>694</sup> This is a feature of all three journeys, although the second two act in parallel much more than the original description of this action. VW 5: at the end of his first stay in Rome, Stephen noted only briefly and in passing that Wilfrid 'with the aid of the holy relics which he found there, setting out in the peace of Christ, returned safely to his father, the Archbishop of Lyons (a city of Gaul)', *Dei cum reliquiarum sanctorum quas illic invenit auxilio in pace Christi profecturus, iterum ad patrem suum archiepiscopum Lugdunae Galliae civitatis commode pervenit.*

<sup>695</sup> VW 33: *circumiens loca sanctorum ad orationem per plures dies et reliquiarum sanctorum ab electis viris plurimum ad consolationem ecclesiarum Brittanniae adeptus.*

Wilfrid ‘*circumiens* with his friends the shrines of the saints, and according to his habit, collected from elect men holy relics authenticated by the names of saints’.<sup>696</sup>

Whatever his devotional movements whilst he was present in Rome, it is only at the very end of each visit that Stephen felt compelled to make note of them, and each time in combination with the acquisition of relics. Stephen emphasized the collection of relics, and their verification, which is an acknowledgement of the role played by Wilfrid’s ever expanding collection of Roman saints to his and his *familia*’s prestige. Stephen also invoked these relics, present on every return journey, as an element through which God’s protection in travel was sought. On a practical note, they also contributed to the reproduction of Roman shrines to universal saints at churches in Britain. Clearly, Stephen’s audience held onto some idea of what devotional activity looked like, but Stephen did not present it. Travelling around and between the shrines in one place is repeated but not emphasized.<sup>697</sup> The implication is that the audience would have experience of these practices in parallel contexts, and thus the details were not necessary. Narrated movement before the saints was unimportant to the texts’ primary audience. Interactions with and movement around a devotional landscape was a part of Christian devotion, even for those who did not travel outside of their local area. Early medieval Christians experienced similar devotions in their own holy places. This mobility translated experience into understanding. In an ever-changing devotional landscape, an awareness of mobility enacted in different holy places took

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<sup>696</sup> VW 55: *cum sociis loca sanctorum circumiens moreque suo ab electis viris sanctas reliquias nominatim congregans.*

<sup>697</sup> The emphasis of Wilfrid’s activities in Rome is consistently on the conversations that he had with senior papal figures. Whether it is the Archdeacon Boniface, whom Stephen reported taught Wilfrid during the course of his first stint in Rome or later Popes and the synods that clear his name and restore his power, Wilfrid’s Roman landscape is focussed on the people with whom he spoke.

on a universal feature, connecting an audience to devotional mobility practices across different locations.

Wilfrid evoked or recreated Roman holy places in Northumbria in the churches that he built, particularly evident in the churches dedicated to saints Peter and Andrew at Ripon and Hexham. These churches were built of Roman stone, evoking Roman style with their angular nature and below-ground crypts evoking Roman catacombs.<sup>698</sup> As noted in Chapter 1.2, the physicality of churches in Northumbria reflects the construction of a Roman style devotional landscape for visitors. Gallic-style crypts built in Northumbria at Hexham and Ripon mimicked those in Rome; recent ground penetrating radar suggests that a similar crypt lies beneath the chancel at St Paul's, Jarrow.<sup>699</sup> These are not only creations of Rome in Northumbria, they are the result of active memorialization activities that constructed a landscape suitable for visitors, and that curated their spiritual experience. The crypt itself is an indicator of importance; it mimicked Old St Peter's in Rome and allowed the circulation of visitors without interrupting the devotions in the church above.

These are no simple evocations of Rome; journeys and petitions could be made to her saints from afar through Rome remade on British soil. The meaning and practice of mobility enacted in these places not only transformed distant places into local ones and vice versa, they created local narratives of sanctity for the universal martyrs. Instead of seeing Rome solely as a fixed geographical place, there is some fluidity to how it was perceived, and mobility to and around these landscapes becomes universal. Further, Wilfrid's relic collecting and church architecture speak to one means by which

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<sup>698</sup> As commented on by Ó Carragáin and Thacker, "Wilfrid in Rome", 220-1.

<sup>699</sup> Cambridge and Williams, "Hexham Abbey", 77-9; Cambridge, "Wilfrid's Architecture at Ripon and Hexham". For Jarrow's crypt, see Turner, Semple, and Turner, *Wearmouth and Jarrow*, 197-8.

a devotional landscape was formed in Northumbria for the articulation of Rome, and for an enhanced visitor experience; Rome was present in Wilfrid's churches.

Early medieval travel to and around shrines comes to us mediated by narrative. Whilst we know travel was a requirement on many levels, and the circuits of shrines and types of devotional activities can be constructed from a range of sources, early medieval authors did not seek to present movement to and at holy places within their narratives. Movement in the footsteps of saints is not narratively significant. Instead, these narratives disguised movement, and described holy places in Rome in immobile and general terms: the *loca* of interaction between man and holiness is not given a specific place or form. This created an element of fluidity in how Wilfrid was imagined to have behaved and provided a window for familiarization. Through this, the audience could apply their own experience with shrines to the universal martyrs to their conceptualization of Wilfrid's behaviour in an unfamiliar place.

### 3.1.2. Mobility to and around Lindisfarne

Implicit in narratives of travelling around holy places is the idea that such places were set up to receive visitors. The remainder of this chapter uses the transformation of travel and holy places between VCA and VCP to demonstrate the growing complexity of and control over the Lindisfarne devotional landscape expressed by those who commissioned the texts' productions. Both lives of Cuthbert imbued movement with a range of different meanings; social context and narrative tropes made Cuthbert's travel, and that of those around him, meaningful. By understanding the full range of travel both directly and indirectly present in the *vitae* and across the devotional landscape of Lindisfarne, the significance of mobility in society is elucidated.

Agenda for the inclusion of travel within constructed narratives are discernible from the two lives of Cuthbert. Both texts paint a picture of Cuthbert preaching out in the countryside, roaming from village to village, converting and healing as he went. He was evidently a highly mobile individual from his earliest time as a secular shepherd to his end when his death and healing prowess acted as an incentive for cultic travel to experience his posthumous healing touch. Both of the texts legitimize, explain, and provide examples for cultic travel to places associated with Cuthbert. They do so in different ways due to the differing nature of place within the two texts. The texts are firstly for an internal audience. For this audience, each text legitimized the presence of travellers who visited Cuthbert's places.<sup>700</sup> Perhaps the stories of Cuthbert were communicated to this visiting audience. Thus the *vitae*, or certain episodes from them that were told to travellers, represent an affirmation of the actions undertaken by the devotional visitor.<sup>701</sup> When Lindisfarne exported the *vitae* to an external audience,

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<sup>700</sup> Audience is an important aspect of considering for whom the *vitae* were written. This has been the core of extensive discussion, of which a great deal of focus has been on the internal audience at Lindisfarne and Melrose, and within Northumbria more broadly. These discussions focus on the ecclesiastical politics of Northumbria in the period in which the texts were written. See, for example, Berschin, "*Opus Deliberatum Ac Perfectum*"; Alan Thacker, "Lindisfarne and the Origins of the Cult of St. Cuthbert", in *St. Cuthbert, His Cult and His Community to A.D. 1200*, ed. Gerald Bonner, David W. Rollason and Clare Stancliffe (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1989), 103-22. The acceptance of devotional travellers and miracle seekers within the *vitae* would have presented a model of the types of visitors acceptable to Cuthbert, and to those who authorized his cult.

<sup>701</sup> The written forms of the *vitae* establish its contents as the authorized version of his life. Those who visited the cult sites, as well as preachers from Lindisfarne and Melrose, would have learned and then distributed the narratives contained within them, both orally and textually. There were international components to both texts' construction, as is discussed by Carole E. Newlands, "Bede and Images of Saint Cuthbert", *Traditio* 52 (1997): 73-109, at 78-9. VCP in particular has been argued to cast its net widely in a European context to advance the bishop and the cult, see Thacker, "Lindisfarne". This would include the promotion of Cuthbert's cult for devotional visitors. Catherine Cubitt has argued for the wider audience that Bede had in mind when writing VCP, see Catherine Cubitt, "Memory and Narrative in the Cult of Early Anglo-Saxon Saints", in *The Uses of the Past in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Yitzhak Hen and Matthew Innes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 29-66, at 42. Devotional visitors to Lindisfarne are included within the texts, and would have been a source of income and prestige for the cult centre(s). Therefore, the management of visitors was important. The *vitae* form one way in which the intentions of visitors could be influenced.

they presented a model of cultic travel to the saint alongside examples of the saint's humility in travelling and his enthusiasm for clerical mobility.

Cuthbert was a regular traveller as both of his *vitae* sought to establish. The significance of this agreement between the two narratives is as worthy of note as the differences that illuminate the changing devotional landscape. Cuthbert's frequent travel was a requisite part of clerical activity, and both texts are diligent in presenting Cuthbert as an energetic and active cleric and later bishop.<sup>702</sup> Whilst prior at Melrose, Bede remarked that Cuthbert 'frequently went forth from the monastery to correct the errors of both kinds of sinners, sometimes riding on a horse but more often going on foot'.<sup>703</sup> This, travelling to teach, was the duty of cleric and priest. Cuthbert went further than his peers did, he made a point of searching out those steep rugged places in the hills that others dreaded to visit because of their poverty and squalor – at times he was away from the monastery for up to a month living with rough hill-folk.<sup>704</sup> This, as was noted in Chapter 2.2, is a demonstration of the inherent connection between travel and preaching, the significance of travelling to the priestly lifestyle and the

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<sup>702</sup> Bede's emphasis on Cuthbert as an ideal example of an active bishop has often been noted, however, the role of travel within this idealized clerical activity, not as an aside about 'itinerant priests' but as central to a cleric's means of preaching, should be further highlighted, and Cuthbert plays a significant role in embodying this practice. Alan Thacker first placed Cuthbert's idealized behaviour within Bede's reforming agenda in "Ideal of Reform". The significance of good examples of episcopal authority is further discussed by Scott DeGregorio, "Visions of Reform"; "Monasticism and Reform"; "Bede's *In Ezram Et Neemiam*". The example of Cuthbert as an active travelling bishop and cleric predates Bede's reform agenda, it is a feature of Cuthbert's character that the anonymous author of VCA also sought to draw out. The highly mobile clerical class, exemplified by Cuthbert, is significant to the underlying nature of the church in Anglo-Saxon England.

<sup>703</sup> VCP 9: *utrumque ergo corrigendum errorem crebro ipse de monasterio egressus aliquotiens equo sedens, sed sepius pedes incedens*

<sup>704</sup> VCP 9. One of the most severe criticisms of episcopal behaviour within Bede's *Epistola ad Ecgbertum* is that bishops and their priests failed to visit the remote settlements in forests and mountains but still claimed taxes from them. For an analysis of the *Epistola* in its own right see DeGregorio, "Visions of Reform", 207-18; the particular problem of avarice is discussed 212-13, and contextualized 228-30. Bede's outline of this action does not confront the monetary reality of pastoral care; his presentation of the difficulties and labour entailed in doing the job correctly praises Cuthbert, and those who would follow his example, but he does not suggest that Cuthbert went beyond his required duties.



reference that he travelled on foot more often than on horseback is a part of a conceptualization of apostolic-style preaching on foot. Clerical duties necessitated travel and extended absences from the monastery, and clerical obedience was very important for the stability of the community.<sup>705</sup>

Both narratives present Cuthbert's eremitical isolation on Farne in combination with constant communication with the monks of Lindisfarne, who travelled back and forth between the monastery and Cuthbert's hermitage.<sup>706</sup> The Lindisfarne brethren at the coenobitic motherhouse maintained regular contact with Cuthbert throughout the duration of his hermitage; this acts as a reminder that such supervision from the motherhouse was vital.<sup>707</sup> Community oversight of both the ascetic and the travelling cleric parallel one another, and, in Cuthbert, both lifestyles converged.<sup>708</sup> Through his hagiographies, Cuthbert exhibited his compliance with his vow of obedience as both traveller and hermit. Isolation in either form was an earned privilege during which the strictures of normal monasticism were required to be maintained; the support of the coenobitic brethren is central to observing those strictures correctly.<sup>709</sup>

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<sup>705</sup> Chapter 1.2 dealt with clerical travel and obedience, whilst Chapter 1.1 discussed stability as firmness of institution and a virtue.

<sup>706</sup> Monks from Lindisfarne went out to visit Cuthbert, and references to the provision of a guest-house on Farne are found in VCA iii.2-4; VCP 18-21. Following his return to Farne after two years as bishop, the connection between Cuthbert in his hermitage and the motherhouse is maintained in VCA iv.12-13; VCP 36-40.

<sup>707</sup> RB 1.3-5 stipulates that eremitical lifestyles are for those 'have come through the test of living in a monastery for a long time, and have passed beyond the first fervour of monastic life' *horum qui non conversationis fervore novicio, sed monasterii probatione diuturna*. As was discussed in Chapter 1.2, proven commitment to and extensive experience living with monastic strictures were a prerequisite to living outside of the community. In RB, this is explicitly stated for the hermit, but the isolation of the travelling priest from the support of his community would imply that a similar level of experience and trust were required.

<sup>708</sup> His month-long absences preaching in the Northumbrian hills can be seen as parallel to spells of isolation from the community during his Farne hermitage.

<sup>709</sup> Both *vitae* presented Cuthbert as a significant figure in creating, enforcing, and embodying the rule followed at Lindisfarne. As something that both the anonymous author and Bede choose to stress, it is clearly important to Cuthbert's cult that their progenitor followed this rule even when separated by his hermitage here (and, presumably, when he was travelling). For the Lindisfarne rule, see VCA iii.1: 'he

Cuthbert's interaction with Ælfflæd is the only narrated example of his communication from Farne that is unambiguously with individuals from outside of Lindisfarne. Bede wrote that Cuthbert sent a linen cincture to Ælfflæd, who was suffering from an affliction. Cuthbert had been miraculously alerted to her illness, and the cincture healed her and one of her nuns. Both authors also noted that he sailed to Coquet Island to talk with Ælfflæd when she sent for him.<sup>710</sup> The emphasis of these accounts lies in Cuthbert reaching out from his place of hermitage, rather than remaining in his isolated place and being visited. Although both narratives sought to create the image of a period of eremitical asceticism in isolation and suggest that there was a phase in his life when he did not undertake clerical actions, neither removed his connection with Ælfflæd, which, single journey though it is, suggests that Cuthbert remained active from his Farne base. This underlying expectation of clerical mobility is significant in how one interprets the church and its role in Northumbria; it is active and outward looking. Both accounts imbued Cuthbert's vocation with movement.

There are few accounts of visitors to Cuthbert during his life. Instead, Cuthbert performed most of the *vitae*'s miracles when he himself was the traveller. Cuthbert did not receive miracle-seekers on Farne or at the Lindisfarne monastery in either narrative. The only healing miracle that he performed within the confines of monastic space is

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arranged our rule of life which we composed then for the first time and which we observe even to this day along with the rule of St Benedict', *et nobis regularem uitam primum componentibus constituit, quam usque hodie cum regula Benedicti obseruamus*. Bede is less specific, noting in VCP 16 that Eata transferred Cuthbert to Lindisfarne 'in order that there also he might both teach the rule of monastic perfection by his authority as prior and illustrate it by the example of his virtue', *ut ibi quoque regulam monachicae perfectionis et praepositi auctoritate doceret, et exemplo uirtutis ostenderet*. Cuthbert, conflicted with established members of the Lindisfarne community over the new rule, and the disagreements remained pertinent when VCP was composed. In the new deathbed scene, Bede noted that Cuthbert had said, amongst other things, 'practise with zeal those rules of regular discipline which the divine mercy has deigned to give you through my ministry', *ea quoque quae per meum ministerium uobis diuina pietas instituta uitae regularis dare dignata est, exercete solliciti*.

<sup>710</sup> VCP 23 and 24; VCA iii.6.

that of Walhstod, a member of the Lindisfarne brethren who ministered to the saint when he was ill.<sup>711</sup> Both narrators agree that Cuthbert did have one visitor to his hermitage, other than the monks of Lindisfarne. This was Hereberht, a fellow anchorite based on an island in a western lake who habitually went to see Cuthbert and who also visited him whilst he was staying in Carlisle.<sup>712</sup> Thus, during Cuthbert's lifetime, the monastic spaces of Lindisfarne and Farne appear to be restricted to the monastery's inhabitants and other mobile churchmen. There is no sense of travellers seeking the holy man or his places during his lifetime.

However, Bede stated that, whilst in his hermitage, Cuthbert received visitors in great number from around Lindisfarne and further afield because of his virtuous reputation.<sup>713</sup> The statement that, in addition to guests from Lindisfarne, he received visitors 'from the remoter parts of Britain' is not reflected in the presence of guests or the movement of people to him narrated in either *vita*.<sup>714</sup> Instead, Cuthbert's interaction with the remote places of Northumbria is clearly associated with his active preaching. This statement may reflect his posthumous reputation and growing stream of visitors. As time passed, the emphasis on visiting Cuthbert's places became more prominent. An outline of the wisdom that Cuthbert's visitors sought follows the statement on the distances that they had travelled. Bede's further illumination of these

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<sup>711</sup> VCA iv.12; VCP 38. This is just one episodes that illustrates the connections that Cuthbert maintained with the monastery on Lindisfarne though his period of hermitage.

<sup>712</sup> VCA iv.9; VCP 28.

<sup>713</sup> VCP 22: 'now many came to the man of God, not only from the neighbourhood of Lindisfarne but also from the remoter parts of Britain, having been attracted by the fame of his virtues', *ueniebant autem multi ad uirum Dei non solum de proximis Lindisfarnensium fmibus, sed etiam de remotioribus Brittanniae partibus fama nimirum uirtutum eius acciti*. In light of VCP 22's focus on the advice that Cuthbert gave concerning spiritual matters, the exhortation to the brethren who visited not to wonder at his way of life, and his assertion that all monastic lifestyles should be admired, *uirtutum* ought to be translated as 'virtues' rather than Colgrave's 'miracle-working'. 'Virtues' reference his overall reputation for spiritual and moral integrity, and the perfection that he achieved in his eremitical battles.

<sup>714</sup> VCP 22: *de remotioribus Brittanniae partibus*.

visitors is suggestive of the role that Cuthbert played during his lifetime as a spiritual father and mentor, particularly to those brethren who visited from Lindisfarne. Bede explains that they ‘declared to him either the sins they had committed or the temptations of devils to which they were exposed, or else revealed the common troubles of mankind by which they were afflicted, hoping that they would get consolation from a man of such sanctity’.<sup>715</sup> The spiritual character of these conversations about the nature of sin and temptation is suggestive that Bede envisaged visitors to Cuthbert to have been educated in the Church themselves. After Cuthbert’s death, people came to Lindisfarne for healing miracles, but, during his life, they sought spiritual guidance.<sup>716</sup>

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<sup>715</sup> VCP 22: *uel sua quae commisissent errata, uel demonum quae paterentur temptamenta profitentes, uel certe communia mortalium quibus amigerentur aduersa patefacientes, a tantae sanctitatis uiro se consolandos sperabant.*

<sup>716</sup> One finds a parallel in Guthlac, the Mercian saint of Crowland. According to Felix, his hagiographer, Guthlac was particularly famed for his spiritual wisdom, and, in contrast to Cuthbert, his hagiography is filled with details of visitors who came to speak with the living saint, see Felix, *Vita Guthlaci* = *The Life of Guthlac*, ed. and trans. Bertram Colgrave, *Felix’s Life of Saint Guthlac* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956). Felix quoted and expanded Bede’s praise of Cuthbert in *Vita Guthlaci* 45, saying ‘during these times too, many people of various ranks crowded to see Guthlac the man of God—abbots, brethren, *gesithas*, rich men, the afflicted and the poor—not only from the neighbouring land of the Mercians, but also even from the remote parts of Britain, attracted indeed by the fame of his miracles’, *sub eisdem quoque temporibus ad virum Dei Guthlacum multi diversorum ordinum gradus, abbates, fratres, comites, divites, vexati, pauperes, non solum de proximis Merciorum finibus, verum etiam de remotis Brittanniae partibus, fama nimirum virtutum eius acciti, confluebant.* In contrast to Bede’s posthumous recasting of the saint’s life, Felix’s statement is borne out by the evidence of ten chapters of *Vita Guthlaci* that detail visitors to Guthlac during his life: 28, 35, 37, 40, 41, 43, 44, 45, 46, and 49. These journeys to Crowland are focussed upon the holy man, not his holy places. Guthlac, like Cuthbert, is narrated to have performed posthumous miracles, however, these are more limited, and the only specific places on Crowland that Felix noted are Guthlac’s sepulchre and his house. This stands in contrast to the idea of an expansive devotional landscape that Lindisfarne developed by the time that Bede composed VCP. *Vita Guthlaci* is particularly emphatic in the attention that it drew to the conversation and wisdom that Guthlac could offer; if it makes any comment as to what a visitor to Crowland might expect it is surely this. Lay travellers to Crowland might anticipate a holy conversation rather than a holy place when they interacted with the memory of Guthlac, emphasized by Æthelbald’s posthumous interaction with Guthlac in chapter 52. This is the sole mention of devotional activity at Guthlac’s sepulchre, but Æthelbald primarily sought wisdom from Guthlac, who appeared to him and told him that he would be king. Both Guthlac and Cuthbert provided spiritual wisdom to those who visited them. Cuthbert’s visitors may have been limited to clerics and members of Lindisfarne community, with greater claims made posthumously that echo the extent of his pastoral activities. Guthlac’s reach in life appears to have been greater, drawing in both lay and clerical visitors. The transformation from living spiritual councillor to posthumous miracle-worker was not consistent. It was

### 3.1.2a. Constructing a Devotional Landscape

A complex devotional landscape grew out of the monastic space that received few visitors during Cuthbert's lifetime. In both Cuthbertine *vitae*, the saint is narrated to have been approached posthumously for his miracle-working properties; the earth from the place where he was washed, his possessions, and his sepulchre all provided points of interaction with the saint's healing powers. Through their narration of visitors to Cuthbert's shrine and the resultant miracles, both *vitae* defend the presence of travellers on Lindisfarne and promote acceptable ways of approaching the cult site before and after healing miracles. They also demonstrate the important role that the community on Lindisfarne played in controlling access to the holy man and his miracles. Additionally, the difference between the two lives provides evidence of the changing devotional landscape as visitors became a more formalized presence and their actions and places needed greater mediation.

Cuthbert's body was moved from Farne to the main church on Lindisfarne after his death.<sup>717</sup> VCA dealt with his death and burial swiftly: when he had breathed his last, 'he was carried by ship to our island'.<sup>718</sup> In VCP however, Herefrith related Cuthbert's death; he recounted his detailed conversations with the dying saint that included how his body would be laid and where it would be buried.<sup>719</sup> VCP justifies the movement of Cuthbert's body to Lindisfarne as made with Cuthbert's permission. Despite an initial desire to be buried in his hermitage, he was persuaded that his body should lie in the main church. Initially, Cuthbert had requested that 'when God has taken my

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reliant on the surviving community's efforts in constructing and promoting a cult and its associated devotional landscape.

<sup>717</sup> VCA iv.13; VCP 40.

<sup>718</sup> VCA iv.13: *a nauigantibus adinsulam nostram delatus*.

<sup>719</sup> VCP 37 and 39.

spirit, bury me in this dwelling near my oratory towards the south, on the eastern side of the holy cross which I have erected there'.<sup>720</sup> Herefrith reports that there was disquiet in the monastery over this choice of resting place. Cuthbert, however, thought it a good idea to be buried away from the monastery

on account of the influx of fugitives and guilty men of every sort, who will perhaps flee to my body because, unworthy as I am, reports about me as a servant of God have nevertheless gone forth; and you will be compelled very frequently to intercede with the powers of this world on behalf of such men, and so will be put to much trouble on account of the presence of my body.<sup>721</sup>

Mediating with these visitors was a desirable labour that the brethren of the monastery wanted to undertake, Herefrith said.<sup>722</sup> He and the brethren, it is related, persuaded Cuthbert of the benefits of his burial on Lindisfarne so that they could facilitate the presence of visitors. Cuthbert chose a new burial place on Lindisfarne, inside the church, so that the priests could determine which visitors were allowed access.<sup>723</sup> By being laid to rest in the inner sanctum of the church itself, Cuthbert's body was given layers of protection that visitors need to navigate with their merit, and the community was made adjudicator of that worthiness.

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<sup>720</sup> VCP 37: *cum autem Deus suscepit animam meam, sepelire me in hac mansione iuxta oratorium meum ad meridiem contra orientalem plagam sanctae crucis quam ibidem erexi.*

<sup>721</sup> VCP 37: *propter incursionem profugorum uel noxiorum quorumlibet. Qui cum ad corpus meum forte confugerint, quia qualiscunqu sum, fama tamen exiit de me quia famulus Christi sim, necesse habetis sepius pro talibus apud potentes saeculi intercedere, atque ideo de praesentia corporis mei multum tolerare laborem.*

<sup>722</sup> VCP 37: 'we had pleaded with him earnestly and long, and had declared that labour of this kind would be pleasing and light to us', *at nobis multum diu precantibus laboremque modi huius gratum nobis ac leuem fore asseuerantibus.*

<sup>723</sup> VCP 37: 'in the interior of [the Lindisfarne] church, so that while you yourselves can visit my sepulchre when you wish, it may be in your power to decide whether any of those who come thither should approach it', *in interioribus basilicae uestrae illud tumultetis, quatinus et ipsi cum uultis meum sepulchrum uisitare possitis, et in potestate sit uestra an aliqui illo de aduenientibus accedant.*

Herefrith's *relatio* established that the receipt of visitors at Lindisfarne was central to the monastery's purpose after Cuthbert's death.<sup>724</sup> Therefore, the implication is that, , there had been a backlash against Cuthbert's central burial place and the influx of visitors that he had received between the two *vitae*'s compositions. In explicating the logic behind Cuthbert as a beacon of miraculous power and a protector of fugitives, VCP promoted the idea that Lindisfarne was for visitors. VCP further formalized the role of the Lindisfarne community in mediating access to Cuthbert's body as Cuthbert's own recommendation. Both *vitae* contain details of Cuthbert's posthumous healing miracles; the transformation in the narrative of one of these is further suggestive of the increasingly formalized nature of devotional travel to and on Lindisfarne.

Not all accounts of miracle-work perform that role. The miraculous healing of a member of Willibrord's household is the same across both *vitae*.<sup>725</sup> The un-named man was staying in the guesthouse when he became ill. After a while, he sought to go to the church to ask for relief. He prayed before the relics in VCA, or Cuthbert's sepulchre in VCP, neither narrative embellished upon how. Healed by Cuthbert's intercession, he was able to walk without aid. This simple miracle report connects Cuthbert to Willibrord, another contemporaneous holy man, as such, its purpose is not to illuminate, encourage, or explain practical devotion to the saint. There is a subtle transformation of the emphasis placed on Cuthbert's relics as facilitating healing.

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<sup>724</sup> Herefrith's contribution to the Cuthbertine corpus, known as the *relatio*, has been dated to c.706 as it informed Bede's metrical *Life of Cuthbert*, see Thacker, "Wilfrid: His Cult and His Biographer", 11-12; for the dating of Bede's metrical *Life* to the very early years of Osred's reign, see Lapidge "Bede's Metrical *Vita S. Cuthberti*", 78. This would suggest that the number of visitors to Lindisfarne was an issue in the community within eight years of Cuthbert's translation in 698, implying that the associated promotion of the cult and its growing popularity as a destination for devotional travellers was swift and substantial.

<sup>725</sup> VCA iv.16; VCP 44.

Whilst both narratives ascribed the miracle to Cuthbert, VCA's reference to the relics in the church suggests that the man's prayers were made before the martyrs more generally. The narrative of VCP, more specifically than its predecessor, directed the man's supplications towards Cuthbert and stated more clearly that it was his intercession, through the presence of his body, that enabled the miracle.

The two narratives of the paralytic healed by Cuthbert's shoes also follow the same events.<sup>726</sup> The paralysed man was transferred to Lindisfarne from another monastery because of its skilled physicians, but the doctors could not heal him. When medicine did not heal him, he sought healing from the saint and his shoes because the paralysis had begun in his feet, which the abbot authorized. After sleeping in the shoes, he awoke healed. Finally, he went around the holy places of Lindisfarne praising God.<sup>727</sup> This narrative shows that there was, even at the time of VCA's composition, a sense of the Lindisfarne community, in particular their abbot, controlling access to the saint. It also demonstrates the long heritage of the idea that, following a healing, one should give thanks at the places of the martyrs on Lindisfarne. VCP emphasized its support for this action by noting that the community watched his circuit. Control of the saint and visitors approaching holy places are central features in the transformation of the devotional landscape of Lindisfarne.

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<sup>726</sup> VCA iv.17; VCP 45.

<sup>727</sup> VCA iv.17: 'he went round the places of the sacred martyrs, giving thanks to the Lord because he had been restored to his former health, according to his faith, through the merits of the holy bishop', *circuibat loca sanctorum martyrum, gratias agens Domino, quod meritis sancti episcopi secundum fidem eius pristinae sanitati redditus est*; VCP 45: 'with everyone watching and congratulating him, he went round the holy places praying and offering the sacrifice of praise to his Saviour', *uidentibusque et congratulantibus uniuersis circuiuit loca sancta orando, et suo saluatori sacrificium laudis offerendo*.



The narratives that demonstrate this transformation of the landscape concern the healing of a boy who was demonically possessed.<sup>728</sup> A priest from Lindisfarne was sent for but could not heal him, so that priest advised the father to take his son to the relics of the martyrs housed at the monastery of Lindisfarne.<sup>729</sup> The implications of this detail are clear in both narratives, but Bede spelled them out; ‘the holy martyrs of God would not grant him the cure that was sought, in order that they might show what a high place Cuthbert held amongst them’.<sup>730</sup> The healing took place through the intercession of Cuthbert and the addition of earth ‘from the trench in which that water had been poured, wherein the body of our holy bishop had been washed after his death’ to water that had been blessed.<sup>731</sup> Although the VCA is briefer, the salient details of the miracle are consistent between the two accounts. Both accounts reference that Lindisfarne housed a collection of relics of the martyrs, and both emphasize the significance of Cuthbert’s holy earth. However, VCP transformed elements relating to devotional activity on Lindisfarne and the mediation of healing miracles, indicating an increase in the number of visitors to Lindisfarne and the establishment of an accepted model for receiving those who came to Cuthbert. In particular, the second narrative reconditioned the father and son’s means of giving thanks. Where the earlier VCA records that, once healed, ‘together with his father he gave thanks to God at the relics

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<sup>728</sup> VCP 41; VCA iv.15.

<sup>729</sup> In each the father was directed to the monastery, in VCA iv.15: ‘to the relics of the holy apostles and martyrs of God’, *ad reliquias sanctorum apostolorum et martyrum Dei*; in VCP 41: ‘to pray to the Lord for him at the relics of the blessed martyrs which are [at the monastery]’, *ad reliquias beatorum martirum quae ibi sunt, Dominum pro illo precaretur*.

<sup>730</sup> VCP 41: *noluere sancti Dei martires ei petitam reddere sanitatem, ut quam celsum inter se locum Cuthbertus haberet ostenderent*.

<sup>731</sup> VCA iv.15: *fossa in qua lauacrum corporis sancti episcopi nostri post obitum eius effusus est capiens aspersit in earn*; VCP 41: ‘one of the priests, being instructed in spirit that he could be healed by the help of the blessed father Cuthbert, came secretly to the place in which he knew that the water had been poured wherein his dead body had been washed’, *quidam de presbiteris edoctus in spiritu per opitulationem beati patris Cuthberti ilium posse sanari, uenit clanculo ad locum ubi nouerat effusam fuisse aquam, qua corpus eius defunctum fuerat lotum*.

of the saints' and notes that 'he prayed in the presence of our congregation',<sup>732</sup> the later VCP praises the pair for their visitation of Lindisfarne's holy sites and describes the brethren of Lindisfarne as happy watching them undertake the circuit. Additionally, Bede expanded upon the place where Cuthbert had been washed, highlighting that an additional holy site of miracle-working was being promoted on Lindisfarne, and ensured that priests were at the forefront of mediating miracles.

The place where Cuthbert's body was washed is transformed from an unnamed location to a central place at the heart of Lindisfarne, and a more public shrine than the sepulchre within the church. The anonymous author of VCA had no interest in the place where Cuthbert was washed and covered.<sup>733</sup> This location of Cuthbert's washing was not publicly noted. The man who called upon Cuthbert's aid for the boy is simply said to have 'blessed some water and took and sprinkled in it some of the earth from the trench'.<sup>734</sup> Infused by the contact with Cuthbert's body, the community understood the earth and the trench to be a relic, but its use in this miracle does not suggest that the place was extensively marked, nor that it was yet promoted for its miraculous capability. This story undergoes a pair of key transformations in Bede's retelling: he recast the man as a priest, and described the trench as a shrine to Cuthbert.

Bede wrote about the site of Cuthbert's washing in the chapter that deals with this miracle, rather than describing it at its chronological point. Bede specifically noted

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<sup>732</sup> VCA iv.15: *cum patre suo gratias agens Domino, ad reliquias [...] in conspectu familiae nostrae orauit.*

<sup>733</sup> VCA iv.13: 'he was carried by ship to our island; his whole body was washed, his head wrapped in a head cloth and an obley placed upon his holy breast', *a nauigantibus adinsulam nostram delatus, toto corpore lauato, capite sudario circumdato, oblata super sanctum pectus posita.* It should be noted that Colgrave's translation implies a misleading chronology; his inclusion of the phrase 'but first' into the sequence after the statement that Cuthbert was carried to Lindisfarne should not be read as a statement that Cuthbert was washed (and therefore that the trench was located) on Farne itself.

<sup>734</sup> VCA iv.15: *aquam benedixit, et partem humi de ilia fossa.*

that it was on Lindisfarne, and gave its location and description in detail so that it might be revered as one of Cuthbert's shrines, a relic located outside of the inner sanctuary of the church.

The pit is still shown to-day into which that memorable bath of water was poured—it is in the form of a square with a border of wood on all sides and filled up with pebbles; and it is moreover near the church in which his body rests, on the south side. And it happened from that time, by God's permission, that many miracles of healing took place by means of those same stones or with some of that earth.<sup>735</sup>

This points to the creation of a healing place and Cuthbertine shrine outside of the confines of the church itself. It is significant for controlling movement to and around the saint. The text of VCP imposed the shrine as it appeared and the location in which it stood at the time of the text's composition onto the account of the miracle itself. Through this description, the framed trough of pebbles that was a feature of Lindisfarne's sacred landscape when Bede wrote VCP, is backdated to the 690s when this miracle occurred.<sup>736</sup>

The formalization of the trench as a shrine and its promotion are datable to the period between the two texts' composition.<sup>737</sup> Within VCA, the trench had neither a location

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<sup>735</sup> VCP 41: *Ostenditur usque hodie fossa ilia cui memorabile infusum est lauacrum quadrato scemate facta, ligno undique circumdata, et lapillis intus impleta. Est autem iuxta aecclesiam in qua corpus eius requiescit, ad partem meridianam. Factumque est ex eo tempore, ut plures sanitatum operations per eosdem lapides uel eandem terram Domino donante fierent.*

<sup>736</sup> Bede's ordering of the VCP places this miracle before the discovery of Cuthbert's incorrupt body, and the healing of Willibrord's associate and the paralytic boy after he was translated. If Bede's chronology is correct, then this miracle occurred before 698, and whether or not this was the literal reality, it is the internal reality of Bede's text and therefore what Bede presented to have been the case.

<sup>737</sup> As was noted above in 0.3.1, VCA was composed between 698 and 705. It must follow Cuthbert's translation in 698, it is dedicated to Eadfrith, bishop of Lindisfarne c. 698-721, and states that Aldfrith was currently reigning, so must have been completed before his death in 704-5, discussed by Colgrave, *Two Lives*, 13. VCP was composed before the death of Eadfrith in 721, see Colgrave, *Two Lives*, 16. It may be that, in response to a Wilfridian threat, Bede composed VCP for the Cuthbertine community around 714, see Thacker, "Wilfrid, His Cult and His Biographer", 16. Therefore the formalization of this shrine occurred broadly between 698 and 721, probably in the decade between 704 and 714. This stage in the development of Lindisfarne for devotional visitors may have been a response to the high numbers of visitors implied by Cuthbert's statements reported in Herefrith's *relatio* in c.706, which

nor a physical form. The premise that the earth, infused with Cuthbert's essence through the washing of his body, acted as a conduit for Cuthbert's intercession transcends the texts, it lies beneath both versions of the miracle account. However, in VCA, the community and the anonymous author acknowledged the significance of the earth but not the physical place of the trench. By contrast, Bede highlighted the location of the trench and its significance on Lindisfarne as the originator of healing miracles. He also described the form of the trench such that it is invoked as a shrine itself, not just the locale from which relics could be taken. This is indicative that, during that period, there was an increasing demand for a Cuthbertine shrine outside of the church itself, which indicates the travel of lay individuals to experience the cult's landscape.

This external shrine, imbued with heritage by Bede's account, would likely have been central to the devotional circuit undertaken by the recipients of healing from this very place. Bede explicitly transformed this shrine into Lindisfarne's main healing monument. In this narrative, the one whom this shrine healed is favourably noted to have then undertaken a circuit of Lindisfarne's holy places. Thus, this miracle and its outcome are a model for approaching Cuthbert for healing and the aftermath of that wonder.

The holy places on Lindisfarne and the relics of the blessed martyrs are suggestive of a ritual circuit on Lindisfarne. The martyrs had exalted Cuthbert and shown his membership of their rank through this miracle, and so father and son visit the holy places of all those men of God on Lindisfarne. Bede wrote:

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included the promotion of the idea that Cuthbert endorsed his own burial place as an attraction for travellers.

It was a wonderful and delightful spectacle for all good men, to see the son sound in health going round the holy places with his father and returning thanks with sound mind for the help of the saints, when the day before, on account of his insanity, he did not know who he was or where he was. And with the whole company of the brethren standing by, looking on and congratulating him, he gave praises to our Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ as he knelt at the relics of the martyrs and, being freed from the scourge of the enemy and at length made stronger in faith than he was before, he returned home.<sup>738</sup>

He did not address the route taken or the saints that Lindisfarne favoured. The holy places of Lindisfarne that the father and son toured extend beyond the relics contained within the main church. It is tempting to assume that this a reference to the practice of *an turas* around a number of satellite shrines, similar to that which the archaeology at Inishmurray has revealed.<sup>739</sup> Whether these places' holiness was innate, or whether the presence of relics and constructed shrines created it is unknown. As the pair gave thanks for the saints' help in these places, it seems likely that these holy places were conceptually connected to the major martyrs whose healing had initially been sought. Thus, whether constructed or innately holy places, they perform the function of shrines. Just as Cuthbert's intercession in the miracle showed that he was equal to the martyrs, the promotion of his new external shrine suggests that it was thought of as equal to

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<sup>738</sup> VCP 41: *Mirandum et bonis omnibus delectabile spectaculum, cum uideres filium cum patre sospitem loca sancta circuire, sanctorum auxilio gratias sanissima mente referre, qui pridie prae insania mentis nee se ipsum quis esset uel ubi esset poterat agnoscere. Qui ubi tota fratrum caterua astante, uidente, et congratulante ad reliquias martirum genibus flexis dedit laudem Deo Domino et Saluatori nostro Iesu Christo, iam et ab hostis uerbere liberatus, et in fide firmior quam fuerat effectus, ad propria rediit.*

<sup>739</sup> Ó Carragáin, "The Saint and the Sacred Centre". The ongoing excavations on Holy Island are looking to reveal the details of the early medieval monastic site. The second trench of the 2016 excavation uncovered some of an early medieval cemetery, perhaps lay rather than clerical, containing stone-lined graves, alongside sculptural fragments that have been compared to the crosses on Inishmurray's *leachta*, and quartz pebbles, see Brendon Wilkins, David Petts and Raksha Dave, "Lindisfarne: The Holy Island Archaeology Project 2016 Archaeological Assessment Report" (unpublished report, DigVenues, 2016), 23-5, 38-40. One must be careful not to overstate the direct relevance of Inishmurray's satellite shrines, VCP pre-dates the earliest material associated with *leacha* at Inishmurray, and the Lindisfarne examples have yet to be dated except by comparison. Therefore, it is best to propose that the devotional landscape seen through the lens of VCA and VCP represents an early phase in Lindisfarne's adoption and justification of ritual movement within and around the monastic complex.

those of the martyrs in Bede's time. This more public shrine to Cuthbert, to include him physically and spiritually among the ranks of the martyrs, is the provision of a local saint to the ritual circuit. VCP's transformation of this healing miracle intended to highlight this endorsement of Cuthbert and his new shrine.

The earlier account had simply stated that father and son 'gave thanks to God at the relics of the saints' and prayed under the brethren's gaze.<sup>740</sup> It is worth briefly noting that VCA's specific reference to relics, rather than the *loca sancta* that VCP invoked, along with the father and son's thanks being given under the supervision of the brethren is suggestive that the anonymous author intended that they prayed inside the church. This was not because earlier Lindisfarne lacked a sacred landscape, but because its purpose and its promotion had not been fully realized. Something of a devotional landscape permeated the anonymous author's view of the Lindisfarne complex: as noted above, when Cuthbert's shoes had returned movement to the paralysed man, he made a circuit of the holy places to give thanks.<sup>741</sup> For VCA's author, *circuibat loca sanctorum martyrum* was a way of proving that man's healing; his mobility had been returned and was demonstrated locally before members of the church.<sup>742</sup> By contrast, when Bede composed VCP, the Lindisfarne community were developing a devotional landscape as its own feature. VCP transformed the result of the healing miracle into an endorsement of devotional travel around the holy places on Lindisfarne. VCP did not describe ritual movement itself, but the text was involved in reconstructing Lindisfarne's self-perception as a destination for devotional travel and

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<sup>740</sup> VCA iv.15: *suo gratias agens Domino, ad reliquias sanctorum*.

<sup>741</sup> VCA, iv.17: 'he went round the places of the sacred martyrs, giving thanks to the Lord because he had been restored to his former health', *circuibat loca sanctorum martyrum, gratias agens Domino [...] eius pristinae sanitati redditus est*.

<sup>742</sup> Consider this in parallel to the performative rejection of vehicles by the healed and the expression of pedestrian mobility to highlight the extent of the healing miracle, discussed in 2.2.3.

ritual movement. The implication of this briefly narrated travel is a much wider practice of devotional movement that was available to travellers within Lindisfarne's monastic complex.

The last miracle contained within VCP reflects on the on-going significance of the succession of hermits on Farne. Farne and its incumbent holy man represent another facet of devotional *loca* managed by Lindisfarne. Felgild succeeded Æthelwald, who was himself Cuthbert's successor. In VCP's final miracle, a cowhide that served as protection from the winds inside the Farne oratory healed Felgild.<sup>743</sup> The narrative ascribes the power of this relic to both of his predecessors: Æthelwald had attached the hide to the oratory that Cuthbert had built. As their successor, Felgild was accountable for the relic and sought to cut it into pieces to distribute. He inherited their sanctuary and responsibility for the dispersal of their cults. Additionally, he was obliged to perform their role as a dispenser of spiritual wisdom from within his enclosed position on Farne. Bede did not spell out the details of this, as the evidence for it comes from his account of how he knew of the miracle:

This was first told me by a certain devout priest of this monastery at Jarrow who affirmed that he first knew Felgild's face in its swollen and deformed state, and afterwards had felt it with his hands through the window after it was healed. And Felgild himself related it afterwards, adding that it took place as the priest had narrated, and that from that time although he remained shut up as before for many years, his face had always been free from this affliction.<sup>744</sup>

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<sup>743</sup> VCP 46.

<sup>744</sup> VCP 46: *iuxta quod mihi et primo religiosus quidam presbiter huius monasterii Gyruensis indicavit, qui se uultum illius et prius tumentem ac deformem nosse, et postea mundatum per fenestram manu palpasse referebat, et ipse postmodum Felgildus retulit, astruens quia res ipsa ita ut presbiter narrauerat esset completa, et quod ex eo tempore cum inclusus per multa annorum curricula maneret ut prius immunem ab huiusmodi molestia uultum semper haberet.*

The community on Lindisfarne, presumably, controlled the oratory on Farne, and so interactions with the holy man were not available to all visitors. However, it is clear that for priests from Jarrow, and presumably other similarly deserving individuals, the holy man on Farne was a devotional destination. The incumbent hermit provided spiritual wisdom, the promise of intercessions from himself and his predecessors, and tactile piety both in relation to his person and the cowhide relic.

### 3.1.3. Experiencing a Devotional Landscape

This chapter has tied together the various strands of mobility found in the two prose lives of Cuthbert to demonstrate the complex nature of movement and the various roles that it can play in the narration of a single saint's life. The construction of a holy place specifically called on ideas and practices of mobility; here, it has been necessary to pull together the various strands of mobility within these texts to present the intersection of narrative, holy place, and movement. The two *vitae* agree on most aspects of travel. Cuthbert's own travel was prolific and is a demonstration of his perfection in performing the active role of a teacher through various clerical ranks. Cuthbert's clerical travel reflects the mobility of the ideal priest, never tiring of the road for the glorification of God's word and kingdom amongst the Anglo-Saxons. As a hermit, he was always in communion with Lindisfarne, receiving visiting brethren. Bede and the anonymous author both only recorded the brethren of Lindisfarne amongst Cuthbert's visitors, despite Bede's statement that 'many came to the man of God, not only from the neighbourhood of Lindisfarne but also from the remoter parts of Britain'.<sup>745</sup> The expanded claim for his influence most likely sought to reaffirm the

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<sup>745</sup> VCP 22: *ueniebant autem multi ad uirum Dei non solum de proximis Lindisfarnensium fmibus, sed etiam de remotioribus Brittanniae partibus.*



rightness of receiving visitors from afar to Lindisfarne in VCP's present and future, confirming the message given by the posthumous miracles.

The posthumous miracles in VCP are concerned with creating and promoting Lindisfarne as a devotional destination. The narrative does not describe or even invoke travel and movement particularly, but it makes clear the underlying mobility within Northumbrian society, at least within Lindisfarne's diocese. Ritual circuits combining universal and local saints could be performed on Lindisfarne by visiting shrines managed by the monastic foundation, who were encouraged in their new *vita* to champion visitors and their devotional activities. Cuthbert was being newly promoted as endorsing his role as the centre of an active cult that supported visitors to his various and increasing relics and shrines on Lindisfarne. Farne, too, was included in devotional activity. Under the supervision of the monastery, the succession of holy men provided access to an ongoing tradition of spiritual wisdom that supplemented the growing trend for the creation and maintenance of holy places. VCP puts responsibility for Cuthbert's cult on Lindisfarne's priests, making them the gatekeepers for the most precious relics. Nevertheless, the endorsement is clear: they must allow travellers.

The devotional traveller experienced mobility in the journey to Lindisfarne and whilst there. The actuality of experience and its meanings to individual visitors are not clear. However, the narratives illuminate something of the landscape around which they travelled and the extent to which that landscape was managed and developing. This aid to mobility and encouragement of movement within the controlled and maintained environment is significant in broadening our understanding of the social reality of mobility and the ways in which narrative itself contributed to mobile practices and the social role of travel.

## 3.2. In Transmitting the Holy Land

Lindisfarne's devotional landscape would have been a familiar experience to some audiences of the Cuthbertine *vitae*. An early medieval reader of either *vita* would have understood the descriptions of devotional practices and the use of the landscape through their own physical embodiment and experience of travel to and around the monastery's places and shrines, or that of similar monasteries. In contrast, texts that describe the devotional landscape of the Holy Land would have been read with a solely textual framework; the places of the bible and their associated ritual would only have been experienced through this textual embodiment. These two case studies in combination, therefore, display the wide range of meaning that a focus on Mobilities and narratives of travel can illuminate. The conceptualization of the distant landscape of the Levant is static, rather than changing like Northumbria's own holy places. It is envisaged through a prism of historical documents, through scripture and early church writings.

Narratives contributed to mobility literally and metaphorically. One such contribution to non-literal travel is the elucidation of the Holy Land presented in the various texts of *De Locis Sanctis*. The experience of travel through narratives extended to travel in thought, which supported the experience of movement through liturgy and scripture. *De Locis Sanctis* in all its forms was a powerful transformative text that aided travel in thought by developing the meaning of the landscape of the Holy Land. Adomnán, abbot of Iona, wrote *De Locis Sanctis*, combining the writings of the Church Fathers and the eyewitness testimony of Arculf, a bishop from Gaul, to supply his monastery and others with a reference work for scriptural exegesis and to resolve problems that

arise within the scriptures.<sup>746</sup> This process of engagement with scriptural literature is not solely textual, it is imaginative. Thomas O’Loughlin, whose scholarship has transformed our understanding of *De Locis Sanctis*, explains that ‘its “picture” of the Holy Places is the product of a library and the questions that came to monks arose from their imaginative interaction with that distant land in reading and prayer’.<sup>747</sup>

Adomnán gifted a copy to Aldfrith of Northumbria, and Bede revised the text into his own DLS and extracted from his version into HE. The transmission of texts and learning is the product of the mobile clerical classes, as was the focus of the discussion in Chapter 1.2. Occasionally, the movement of people and books, knowledge of and from distant places is the focus of narrative praise, as was the case for Biscop and Wilfrid and their material gains from Rome, presented in their respective hagiographies. In the presentation of the intellectual and textual backgrounds to the three versions of *De Locis Sanctis*, the transmission of knowledge and of manuscripts provide the narrational context for similar praise. The three distinct texts also provide an illustration of the range of uses of travel within early medieval narratives. This chapter particularly focusses on Bede’s extracts from his abridgement of *De Locis Sanctis*, his own DLS, which he included towards the end of the fifth Book of HE. In HE v.15-17, Bede combined the experience of selected Holy Land places in *De Locis Sanctis* with Adomnán and Arculf’s travels, which were central to the text’s transmission. This chapter follows suit and interprets the disparate characters of Adomnán and Arculf’s movements around Britain and the places of the Holy Land. The symbolic way that Bede dealt with their travel in Britain and Ireland contrasts with

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<sup>746</sup> For a full discussion of the meanings, purposes and uses of Adomnán’s *De Locis Sanctis*, see Thomas O’Loughlin, *Adomnán and the Holy Places*.

<sup>747</sup> *Ibid.*, 210.

the scriptural meaning of Arculf's experiences in the Holy Land. The absence of narrated travel when Bede created access to the Holy Land differs from the significance that he placed on the narrated travel more locally around Britain and Ireland both in DLS and HE v.15. The experience of travel in the early medieval narrative tradition could be layered and figurative, however, narrated travel did not mediate the experience of scriptural lands. This chapter highlights the difference between the presentation of biblical space and the utilization of travel within these narratives.

Arculf has been treated increasingly with scepticism through the scholarly process that has raised the profile of Adomnán as author and composer of *De Locis Sanctis*, rather than simply the recorder of Arculf's travelogue.<sup>748</sup> This has raised the profile of investigating textual intentions and the meanings of *De Locis Sanctis*. In turn, Arculf is no longer viewed as the text's author and it is not fitting to focus on Arculf's 'pilgrimage'. The present discussion does not engage with the question of whether there was an Arculf, or whether he travelled around the Holy Land; it focusses upon the significance of travel as the three accounts of *De Locis Sanctis* presented by Adomnán and Bede narrated it.<sup>749</sup>

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<sup>748</sup> For an overview, see *ibid.*, 61-3. O'Loughlin's own position is that the 'Arculf' found in the text is a composite of many sources and is distinct from the possible historical person of Arculf, whose existence is impossible to prove or disprove. There has been a turn in recent years to highlight the genuine information about the near east in the seventh century, see Aist, "Adomnán, Arculf and the Source Material"; Hoyland and Waidler, "Adomnán's *De Locis Sanctis*". These studies support O'Loughlin's inclination to see Adomnán's authorship as a negotiation of different materials, neither solely the result of Adomnán's intellectual examination nor Arculf's testimony alone.

<sup>749</sup> Ultimately, in asking questions about the texts and the reality that they create, the existence of Arculf in an historical past is only relevant in relation to his presence within the texts. Whether he was an historical figure or a narrative device, within the texts, his reality and the role that he performed are the same: he is the authority, the eyewitness, and a human connection to scripture.

### 3.2.1. The Biblical Landscape

Let us also, therefore, dearly beloved brothers, go over in thought to Bethlehem, the city of David, and let us also recall [it] with love; let us celebrate [Christ's] incarnation with fitting honors. Having cast aside fleshly concupiscence, let us go over with the whole desire of our mind to the heavenly Bethlehem, that is, the house of living bread, not made by hands but eternal in heaven, and let us lovingly recall that the word which was made flesh has ascended in the flesh to where he sits at the right hand of God the Father.<sup>750</sup>

Bede thus responds to Luke 2:15-20 in one of his Christmas homilies. Luke has related how, when the angels had departed from the shepherds who were outside Bethlehem, they said to one another 'let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us'.<sup>751</sup> *Transeo cogitando* (to go in thought) is the means by which most western Christians could experience the Holy Land, and, for many, it would also represent their experiences of Rome and the martyrs too. This invocation to travel in thought is not common in Bede's writing, yet in every liturgical year, and even in the course of daily worship, the events and places of Christ's life were visited. The direct instruction to visit Christ at his nativity is implied at every other stage in his life throughout the Christian calendar. Through his homilies, Bede emphasized the presence of what happened in Judea in Britain through the reading and preaching of scripture.<sup>752</sup>

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<sup>750</sup> *Hom. i.7: transeamus ergo et nos, fratres carissimi, cogitando usque bethleem ciuitatem dauid et recolamus amando atque eius incarnationem dignis celebremus honoribus. Transeamus abiectis concupiscentiis carnalibus toto mentis desiderio usque bethleem supernam, id est domum panis uiui non manu factam sed aeternam in caelis, et recolamus amando quia uerbum quod caro factum est illuc carne ascendit ibi in dextera dei patris sedet.*

<sup>751</sup> Luke 2:15: *transeamus usque Bethleem et videamus hoc uerbum quod factum est quod fecit Dominus et ostendit nobi.*

<sup>752</sup> For example, Bede noted the impact of the appearance of the Lord in flesh in Judea at his presentation in the Temple as equal to the impact of the Christ in word to Bede's audience in *Hom. i.18*: 'we must not believe that this revelation of the different thoughts took place only at that time in Judaea, and not also among us. Now too, with the appearance of the Lord, 'the thoughts of many hearts are revealed' when the word of salvation is read or preached, and some hearers willingly give heed to it, rejoicing to accomplish in their actions what they have learned by hearing, [while] others turn away from what they

Travel to the Holy Land was not an achievable aim for most western Christians.<sup>753</sup> *De Locis Sanctis* is a guide to the Holy Land, not for potential travellers, but for the physically distant so that they too can experience the Holy Land.<sup>754</sup> Thomas O'Loughlin's has explored the meaning and purpose of Adomnán's *De Locis Sanctis*. He argues of the importance of Arculf's presence in the Holy Land as an expert witness to *martyria*, churches that existed solely for prayer; to the relics of Christ that provide the template for other relics across the Christian world; and to the landscape, knowledge of which was required for liturgical performance and scriptural understanding.<sup>755</sup> Developing O'Loughlin's argument that with the knowledge in *De Locis Sanctis*, the monks of Iona understood their own surroundings as parallels to places in Jerusalem, Tasha Gefreh has demonstrated that imagery present on figural panels on Ionan carved stone crosses reflect the desire to encounter the holy places.<sup>756</sup> *De Locis Sanctis* illustrates the sense of place that could be experienced by those who approached the topographical locations represented on monumental crosses. Travel in

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hear, and do not exert themselves to do these things, but rather struggle against them, reviling them'. *Non haec autem disparium reuelatio cogitationum tunc solum acta in iudaea et non etiam apud nos credenda est actitari. Et nunc enim domino apparente reuelantur ex multis cordibus cogitationes cum lecto uel praedicato uerbo salutis alii audientium libenter auscultant gaudentes perficere actu quae auditu didicerint alii fastidientes quae audiunt non haec agendo patrare sed his potius insultando nituntur contraire.*

<sup>753</sup> The journey was not an impossibility, as demonstrated by Willibald and the small number of Frankish travellers whose journeys between the sixth and tenth centuries were recorded, but it was infrequently undertaken. For the relatively small numbers of western travellers see, for example, Yitzhak Hen, "Holy Land Pilgrims from Frankish Gaul", *Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire* 76, no. 2 (1998): 291-306; John Wilkinson, *Jerusalem Pilgrims before the Crusades*, 2nd ed. (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 2002).

<sup>754</sup> O'Loughlin, *Adomnán and the Holy Places*, 144-76.

<sup>755</sup> Ibid.; "Perceiving Palestine in Early Christian Ireland: Martyrium, Exegetical Key, Relic and Liturgical Space", *Ériu* 54 (2004): 125-37.

<sup>756</sup> "De Locis Sanctis as a Liturgical Text", 191; Tasha Gefreh, "Place, Space and Time: Iona's Early Medieval High Crosses in the Natural and Liturgical Landscape" (PhD Thesis, University of Edinburgh, 2015), 246-7 and 253-7.

thought to distant places through imagery and liturgy is improved with knowledge of the biblical landscape.

O'Loughlin calls upon Augustine's invocation of an expert witness and his experiences as necessary to fully understanding scripture.<sup>757</sup> Thus the landscape, experience of it and of the churches and rituals flesh out the experience of the Christian reader of each version of *De Locis Sanctis*. However, travel plays little role in this conceptualization of place. Adomnán described the results of Arculf's travelling around Jerusalem and the wider biblical landscape, visiting its holy places. However, Adomnán did not express by what means Arculf travelled. He noted Arculf's presence at a range of scriptural and ecclesiastical sites throughout his text, but rarely engaged in a discussion of movement. On one occasion, Adomnán addressed Arculf as a traveller across several regions.<sup>758</sup> But more often Adomnán called him 'holy' or 'oft-mentioned', or, as in the conclusion of the work, *frequentator*, a 'frequenter' or 'frequent visitor', of holy places.<sup>759</sup> Arculf's entire presence in the Holy Land assumes movement but Adomnán never associated the practice or practicalities of travel with that presence, nor did he use his *De Locis Sanctis* as a platform for engaging with significant or symbolic travel. In his reworking of the text, DLS, Bede removed direct references to Arculf from his description of the Holy Land; without the traveller, there is no scope for writing travel.

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<sup>757</sup> Thomas O'Loughlin, "Adomnán and Arculf: The Case of an Expert Witness", *The Journal of Medieval Latin* 07 (1997): 127-46.

<sup>758</sup> Adomnán, *De Locis Sanctis* Book II, 29: 'our friend Arculf, a wanderer over several regions', *plurimarum peragratō regionum noster Arculfus*.

<sup>759</sup> Adomnán, *De Locis Sanctis* Book III, 6: Adomnán invoked prayers for 'Arculf, who being a frequenter of the holy places, most willingly dictated to us his experiences of them', *Arculfo diuinam praecentur clementiam qui haec de sanctis experimenta locis eorum frequentator libentissime nobis dictauit*. Adomnán also called him a *uisitator* 'visitor' of those places.

In Adomnán's text, therefore, there was more occasion for 'writing travel'. Travel, on the few occasions when Adomnán did choose to include it, is meaningful and contributes to his broader themes and interests. For the most part, Adomnán noted that Arculf often visited a site, or lodged in a city for a while without giving any indication of the movement that brought him there. The first reference to Arculf travelling comes towards the end of Book II. In his chapter concerning the sea of Galilee, Adomnán stated: 'our holy Arculf, often mentioned, travelled round the greater part of the sea of Galilee'.<sup>760</sup> Later, he 'made a journey of 8 days from the place where the Jordan emerges from the mouth of the sea of Galilee, as far as the place where it enters the Dead Sea'.<sup>761</sup> In the subsequent chapter, Adomnán likewise referenced Arculf's movement, although this time more briefly, noting that 'the holy priest Arculf, traversing the region of Samaria, came to the city of that province called in Hebrew Sichem'.<sup>762</sup> This instance of movement coincides with the only reference to Jesus' own travel (rather than his presence) on which Adomnán drew. Here, 'the Saviour, wearied by the toil of the journey, sat by this well' and drank the water from this well, and Arculf did likewise.<sup>763</sup> This pair of references to journeying seems to draw attention to the mobility in and transience of these moments.

These two chapters fall within a sequence of snapshots that focus in on Arculf's bodily experiences in the Holy Land. Unlike the majority of episodes in which Arculf was

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<sup>760</sup> Adomnán, *De Locis Sanctis* Book II, 20: *noster sepe memoratus sanctus Arculfus mare Galileae, [...] ex maiore circumiit parte.*

<sup>761</sup> Adomnán, *De Locis Sanctis* Book II, 20: *ab eo loco quo de faucibus mans Galileae Iordanis egreditur usque ad eum locum ubi in mare mortuum intrat octo dierum itiner habuit.*

<sup>762</sup> Adomnán, *De Locis Sanctis* Book II, 21: *Arculfus sacerdos sanctus regionem Samariae peragrans ad eiusdem prouinciae peruenit ciuitatem quae Ebraicae dicitur Sichem.*

<sup>763</sup> Adomnán, *De Locis Sanctis* Book II, 21: *Saluator itineris labore fatigatus cuiusdam did hora sedebat sexta.*



referenced as the authority who had seen and related the sites, monuments, cities, and churches, in these chapters, Adomnán brought some of Arculf's experiences to the reader. This begins in Book II, 16 at the place in the Jordan where Jesus was baptized. Here, Arculf swam in the river. Next, in chapters 17 and 18, Adomnán relates that Arculf experienced the salt of the Dead Sea and salt from the mountain in Sicily through three senses: sight, taste, and touch. This interruption of Book II's focus on the places of Judea outside of Jerusalem to introduce Arculf's sensory experience of Sicilian *sal terrae*, salt of the earth, emphasizes that in this section of the Book, Adomnán deliberately assembled a series of corporal engagements with the Holy Land. Chapter 19 does not contain experiential details but instead describes the path of the Jordan, whilst chapter 20 picks up that path and combines it with Arculf's journey along it. As noted above, chapter 21, which also outlined journeying, included Arculf's drinking from the Samaritan well. The next pair of chapters continues Arculf's experience with the nourishment of the Holy Land. Chapter 22 is brief and simply references John the Baptist's spring in the desert, seen by Arculf. However, in chapter 23, Adomnán explained and created a textual experience of John's diet of locusts and wild honey for an audience to whom the foods were incomprehensible.

As with much of *De Locis Sanctis*, the details of these experiences are quotations, summaries, and borrowings from other authorities. Their importance is not whether Arculf had these precise experiences; it is the creation of a set of experiences that Adomnán's monks, and the text's other audiences, could access. The text enabled the senses of the Holy Land to be recreated in Britain and Ireland. Apparent exoticisms are not contained within these texts for their own purposes, but to bring the reader closer to a saint, or scripture, in this case, to understand John the Baptist's and Jesus'

exertions. When it comes to Arculf's travelling and drinking from the well that Jesus drank from, Adomnán brought Arculf and Jesus into alignment through a shared experience of travel, exhaustion, and being refreshed by water in the same place. A reader can understand these experiences, and share in them, even though they are distant in place.

Bede transformed Adomnán's text removing Arculf from the landscape of the Holy Land. He said nothing of Arculf during the descriptive text concerning the holy places in his DLS, except to note that his testimony differed from the biblical account of the location of David's burial place.<sup>764</sup> The absence of Arculf in the body of later text inherently means that there is an absence of direct corporal engagement with the environment. The alternative is the creation of a less personal, more generic guide to imagined experiences in the Holy Land that sticks to churches and relics. Bede transformed *De Locis Sanctis* from the supposed eyewitness account of Arculf into a geographically focussed presentation of the Holy Land more concentrated on scriptural interpretation than the imaginative sense of being in the Holy Land. However, the details of Arculf's expert testimony remained; his witness lingered as guide for the traveller in thought to Christ's places. Bede guided his audience more directly. He extracted the experiences of Arculf and in his place outlined a general model moving around distant geographical space and interacting with the relics. Through references to customs, he provided the template for his reader's envisioned experiences.

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<sup>764</sup> DLS 7.3: 'I have said these things following the account of Bishop Arculf of Gaul, although Ezra plainly states that David was buried in Jerusalem'. *Haec relationem arculfi galliarum episcopi secutus dixerim; ceterum esdras aperte scribit in hierusalem esse dauid sepultum.*

The biblical landscape is physically distant to the Christians of Britain and Ireland. *De Locis Sanctis* in all of its forms provided the expert witness to experiences in and of Christ's footsteps. Movement is not an attribute of the texts, although their very existence demonstrates the result of various mobilities. A creative mobility that can be physically static allows for the conceptualization of travel in thought, or the imaginative recreation of the Holy Land in a monastic setting. Travel itself, however, is not significant. The remainder of this chapter then deals with the extracts from DLS that Bede included in his HE, and the travel details that frame them. Differing narrative uses of travel in Bede's presentation of Adomnán and Arculf juxtapose the motionless scriptural landscape. Within three chapters of HE, v.15-17, Bede engaged with meaningful narrated mobility and made the static move in thought.

### 3.2.2. The Holy Land in Bede's History

Bede included extracts from his version of DLS in his HE. He chose to include the landscapes of three significant moments of Christ's incarnation: his birth, his passion, and his ascension.<sup>765</sup> He supplemented these with a description of Hebron, the burial place of the patriarchs.<sup>766</sup> Bede introduced these static views of key locations in the scriptural landscape with reference to Adomnán's characteristics, his adoption of the universal Easter calendar, and his travel between Iona, Northumbria, and Ireland.<sup>767</sup> The focus of this case study is the juxtaposition of narrated regional travel, woven into the narrative of Adomnán's conversion to Roman Christian ordinances, and the immobile landscape of the Holy Land.

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<sup>765</sup> HE v.16-17.

<sup>766</sup> HE v.17.

<sup>767</sup> HE v.15.

The biblical landscapes that Bede chose to include in HE are those mentally accessible to all Christians. The key feasts, Christmas, Easter, and Ascension, would have been celebrations in the liturgical calendar observed by the widest of audiences.<sup>768</sup> Bede produced DLS as a training manual and teaching aid for monks, but the audience of HE included secular Christians and, for them, the gospels preached at these key feasts would have featured centrally in their perceptions of the Christ event. Bede preached ‘let us also, therefore, dearly beloved brothers, go over in thought to Bethlehem’ and, in these extracts in HE, he provided the tools to do so for an audience that extended beyond his brethren.<sup>769</sup>

The description of the tombs of the patriarchs is connected to the future kingdom; the patriarchs’ burial place confirms the landscape that will be transformed in the eighth age. The site of Abraham’s tomb, Hebron, and his oak upon the hill of Mamre to its north are markers of the territorial Promised Land that Abraham’s kindred was ensured when God ordered him to leave his father’s land.<sup>770</sup> Abraham’s exile figuratively represents the elect in their *peregrinatio*, their life-journey away from the heavenly *patria*, and his tomb denotes the destination.<sup>771</sup> All Christians experience Abraham’s exile: ‘all the elect who have been born in the baptism of rebirth truly go out from Haran also and come into the land of Canaan’.<sup>772</sup> Abraham’s burial place is significant

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<sup>768</sup> Additionally, Bede’s focus on the churches that mark Christ’s crucifixion and his sepulchre may have been part of a larger scheme in his adaptation of *De Locis Sanctis*. Peter Darby and Daniel Reynolds discussed some of the differences between Bede and Adomnán’s texts; they identify that, for Bede, the central *loci* of the city of Jerusalem are the sites of the passion and resurrection demonstrating his construction of a passion-centric mental map. See “Reassessing the ‘Jerusalem Pilgrims’: The Case of Bede’s *De Locis Sanctis*”, *Bulletin of the Council for British Research in the Levant* 9, no. 1 (2014): 27-31.

<sup>769</sup> *Hom. i.7: transeamus ergo et nos, fratres carissimi, cogitando usque bethleem.*

<sup>770</sup> Genesis 12:1-9.

<sup>771</sup> For an outline of *peregrinatio*, see above, Chapter 1.3.

<sup>772</sup> *InGen Book 3 [12:4], 247: omnes electi qui nati sunt lauacro regenerationis, exeunt profecto de haran ueniunt que in terram chanaan.*

because it makes a claim on the land of Canaan for his kindred in blood and in God. It is a territorial marker and a symbol of God's promise of an earthly and heavenly inheritance. The territorial Promised Land is a representation of the eternal homeland that all Christians seek, and Abraham is an anchor by which all the nations can connect to that *patria*. The tombs of the patriarchs signify the centre of the territorial and the eternal promise that God made to his diverse nations through Abraham.

The significance of the places described in the extracts from DLS reiterates the purpose of *De Locis Sanctis*. Knowledge of the biblical landscape makes the meaning of scripture clearer. A more thorough understanding of the places of Christ's life enabled the experience of liturgy to transcend place; it aids the Christian's travel in thought and experience of Christ's places. Abraham, the father of the faith, and his territorial markers literally illuminate the origins of the faith and are figurative of its future. *De Locis Sanctis*, DLS, and its extract in HE are not direct engagements with movement. The mobility that they reflect is that which found its expression in Christian practice.

Travel plays a number of distinct roles in the combined narratives of how *De Locis Sanctis* came to be, and how it came to be re-written. All forms of *De Locis Sanctis* reflect a duality in the perception of travel to the Holy Land. On the one hand, it is a plausible feat, Arculf's presence both there and in Britain is not challenged by his contemporaries and travel to and around distant lands itself is stated so infrequently and pragmatically that it does not seek to justify and verify the bishop's actions. However, the very purpose of the texts and their provision of a witness to the Holy Land invoke the infeasibility of the texts' audiences themselves taking up that journey. This indistinct idea of travel as other, as remote, as unspoken contrasts with Bede's image of Arculf's regional travel in and around Britain. For Adomnán, Arculf's

presence and eyewitness authority were significant, but his movements were of limited utility. In Bede's narrative, Arculf and Adomnán's travel was important, but only in relation to the text's transmission. Extraordinary travel frames the core idea of *De Locis Sanctis*, but the narrative presentation of this more ordinary travel dramatized the origin of the text and provided an example of the textual experience of mobility in relation to narrative tropes.

### 3.2.2a. Arculf's Tempest and Adomnán's Sailing

Arculf travelled great distances and abandoned his diocese for the duration of his travels to and around the Holy Land, and his visit to Britain. It is only in Bede's DLS, not Adomnán's *De Locis Sanctis* nor the extracts of DLS in HE, that Arculf's time away from his bishopric and travel to and around the Holy Land is addressed directly. Bede is the author of Arculf's motivation to travel, and he is likewise the inventor of the narrative of his journey to Britain. Adomnán had nothing to say on how Arculf came to him. His brief preface states only that 'the holy bishop Arculf, a Gaul by race, versed in diverse far-away regions, and a truthful and quite reliable witness, sojourned for nine months in the city of Jerusalem, traversing the holy places in daily visitations'.<sup>773</sup> Bede only presented information on Arculf and his travel in the final two paragraphs, not the main body of the descriptive text. These contain Arculf's motivation for travel, his longing for the holy places, and his providential arrival in Britain, none of which Adomnán recounted.

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<sup>773</sup> Adomnán, *De Locis Sanctis* Book I, Preface: *Arculfus sanctus episcopus gente Gallus diuersorum longe remotorum peritus locorum uerax index et satis idoneus in Hierusolimitana ciuitate per menses nouem hospitatus et loca sancta cotidianis uisitationibus peragrans.*

Arculf's journey resolved his motivation for travel: 'now as a bishop renowned for his longing for the holy places, he forsook his own country and went to the promised land [...] he eagerly travelled by a circuitous route to all the places he had longed to see'.<sup>774</sup> In this longing for the holy places, Arculf is joined with those kings narrated as having travelled to Rome because of their longing for the saints' places. As was discussed in Chapter 1.2, clerical and monastic journeys to Rome were not narrated in spiritual terms and there was little need for the expression of motivations, but those kings who retired because of their desire for Rome were all narrated in combination with their desire for the holy places and spiritual betterment. The context here is somewhat different from those narratives, as an account of the holy places combining that longing with their description may be a natural articulation of the journey. The explicit expression of a motivation to travel, however, may be a narrative justification of an individual's rejection of their social role in undertaking the journey, as was the case for kings who retired. Here, the bishop who travelled beyond what was usual is given a similar justification.

In his later text, HE, Bede focussed his attention on Adomnán, the author of the original *De Locis Sanctis*, rather than Arculf when he introduced the text of DLS. Bede wrote to present Adomnán's adoption of the Roman Easter and subsequent preaching in Ireland, which acted as a precursor to Iona's adoption of Roman calendar, the apex of his narrative. This moment in his overall narrative trajectory frames the series of extracts from DLS. All that Bede relates of Arculf is that he was

A bishop of Gaul who had visited Jerusalem to see the holy places. He had wandered all over the promised land and had been to Damascus,

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<sup>774</sup> DLS 19.4: *siquidem memoratus antistes desiderio locorum sanctorum patriam deserens terram repromissionis adiit, [...] quae desiderauerat, auida intentione lustrauit.*

Constantinople, Alexandria, and many islands of the sea. But as he was returning to his native land by sea, he was cast by the violence of the tempest on to the west coasts of Britain. After many adventures he came to the servant of Christ Adamnan who found him to be learned in the Scriptures and well acquainted with the holy places.<sup>775</sup>

Within the context of HE, Bede made no attempt to justify Arculf's travel. This is simply a statement that emphasizes Arculf's role in the text as an expert witness: he had been in the biblical lands, was well acquainted with them, and he was learned. The value of the resultant book, 'useful to many and especially to those who live very far from the places where the patriarchs and apostles dwelt, and only know about them what they have learned from books', may be seen to justify the outcomes of his travel to some extent.<sup>776</sup> However, Bede did not state a motivation nor does this stated outcome align with the motivation that Bede narrated in DLS. Thus for HE's wider audience Arculf's renown and his longing for the holy places are left unsaid, although they were no doubt recognized by some of the text's audience. Arculf is not the core of this series of chapters in HE. Adomnán's paschal epiphany is central, and his production and transmission of *De Locis Sanctis* are the secondary focus.

That transmission was a by-product of Adomnán's own travel, which Bede wove into a longer narrative of Adomnán's movements around Britain and Ireland. Adomnán's travel was justified. First, he 'was sent by his people on a mission to Aldfrith'.<sup>777</sup> Adomnán, as an abbot away from his monastery, was justified by this labour on his

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<sup>775</sup> HE v.15: *locorum gratia sanctorum uenerat Hierosolymam, et lustrata omni terra repromissionis Damascum quoque, Constantinopolim, Alexandriam, multas maris insulas adierat, patriam que nauigio reuertens ui tempestatis in occidentalia Britanniae litora dilatus est; ac post multa ad memoratum Christi famulum Adamnanum perueniens, ubi doctus in scripturis sanctorum que locorum gnarus esse compertus est.*

<sup>776</sup> HE v.15: *multis utile et maxime illis, qui longius ab eis locis, in quibus patriarchae uel apostoli erant, secreti ea tantum de his.*

<sup>777</sup> HE v.15: *cum legationis gratia missus a sua gente uenisset ad Aldfridum regem Anglorum.*



brethren's behalf. Bede also gave a reason for Adomnán's later travel in Ireland, once he had converted to the Roman calendar:

On his return home he sought to bring his own people in Iona and those who were in houses subject to his monastery, into the way of truth which he had himself recognized and accepted with his whole heart; but he was unable to do so. So he sailed to Ireland and preached to the people there, modestly explaining to them the true date of Easter.<sup>778</sup>

The significance of Adomnán's avoidance of Iona, so that he did not have to celebrate the feast on the wrong date, is repeated and emphasized. Bede noted that Adomnán celebrated Easter in Ireland. He then returned to Iona but died within the year

thus by the interposition of divine grace, it came about that a man who greatly loved unity and peace was called to life eternal so that he was not compelled, when Eastertime returned, to have a still graver controversy with those who would not follow him in the truth.<sup>779</sup>

The providential invocation of the timeliness of Adomnán's death underlines the correctness of his position, spending time abroad rather than overseeing his monastery where he would have caused discord before his monks were ready to come round to the Roman Easter.

This presentation of Adomnán's travel tends towards neutral travel language. Bede noted that, *missus* (having been sent), Adomnán *uenisset* (came) to Aldfrith, then *redisset* (returned) to Iona. Having failed to convey the catholic Easter to Iona, *naugauit* (he sailed) to Ireland before finally *reuertisset* (he returned) to Iona where he died shortly thereafter. Bede used neutral travel language, only noting Adomnán's

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<sup>778</sup> HE v.15: *qui cum domum redisset, curauit suos, qui erant in Hii qui ue eidem erant subditi monasterio, ad eum quem cognouerat quem que ipse toto ex corde susceperat ueritatis callem perducere, nec ualuit. Nauigauit Hiberniam, et praedicans eis ac modesta exhortatione declarans legitimum paschae tempus.*

<sup>779</sup> HE v.15: *diuina utique gratia disponente, ut uir unitatis ac pacis studiosissimus ante ad uitam raperetur aeternam quam redeunte tempore paschali grauiorem cum eis, qui eum ad ueritatem sequi nolebant, cogeret habere discordiam.*

coming and going and that the abbot travelled on the request of his community. In the one direct reference to sailing, the simple and factual statement that Adomnán sailed to Ireland, along with these additional neutral statements of travel, contrasts with the presentation of Arculf's fated sailing. Within this same chapter, he deals with two different sailings in two very different ways.

In both DLS and HE, Bede formulated Arculf's providential sailing, specifically invoking dangers that he faced, and illustrating the presence of God's hand and design in bringing him to Adomnán.

When [Arculf] wanted to return to his own country, the boat on which he was sailing was carried to our island (that is, Britain) after many diversions caused by a contrary wind. And at last, having faced not a few dangers, he reached the aforementioned venerable man Adamnan.<sup>780</sup>

These elements come together to emphasize the significance of the moment. They present the conclusion of Arculf's journey, his telling of the narrative of his voyage, as the divinely ordained outcome of this travel. This accentuates Arculf's presence and further seeks to justify the journey as a whole because it achieved this aim. Bede's description of Arculf in HE v.15 likewise focusses on the providential sea that brought Arculf to Britain: 'as he was returning to his native land by sea, he was cast by the violence of the tempest on to the west coasts of Britain. After many adventures he came to the servant of Christ Adamnan'.<sup>781</sup>

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<sup>780</sup> DLS 19.5: *sed cum patriam reuisere uellet, nauis, qua uehebatur, post multos anfractus uento contrario nostram, id est britaniorum, insulam perlata est, tandem que ipse post nonnulla pericula ad praefatum uirum uenerabilem adamnanum.*

<sup>781</sup> HE v.15: *patriam que nauigio reuertens ui tempestatis in occidentalia Brittaniae litora dilatus est; ac post multa ad memoratum Christi famulum Adamnanum perueniens.*

The tempest, contrary wind, and dangers of the sea all invoke the allegory of the sea and the divine force that manipulates the sea as a conceptual presence.<sup>782</sup> The turbulence of the sea is figurative of the tempestuous life of this world, which God alone can quell. A voyage that is driven off course by a storm carries a heightened sense of divine providence, thus Arculf was brought to Adomnán by God's hand. Through emphasizing the dangers of the sea voyage and Arculf's destination made by the winds, Bede highlighted God's protection and direction of his vessel Arculf. In Bede's account, Arculf's significant witness was presented in the framing of the text. By contrast, Adomnán was silent on Arculf's travel but frequently referenced the man's testimony within the text. He used Arculf's presence and authority throughout the text to justify, explain, and experience individual places and actions. The providential weight that Bede provided for Arculf's initial presence in Britain emphasized his singular witness; this acts as a counter to his removal of Arculf's direct interactions with the holy places. The implication is that these things were true, and God had chosen to make them known to His people in Britain, but, in Bede's retelling, the places were not seen through the filter of an individual's experience of them.

The way that Bede narrated travel in HE v.15 is significant. The contrast between the matter of fact reference to Adomnán's sailing and the providential nature of Arculf's voyage highlight the meaning that the presence of certain travel details can add to a narrative. Travel's significance is not limited to occasions when it is given figurative connotations. In the presentation of Adomnán's final years, Bede's impression of Adomnán's mobility emphasized his steadfastness and outmanoeuvred calendrical

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<sup>782</sup> As was argued in Chapter 2.1, the allegory of the sea adds an emphasis to references to travel on the sea.

restraints. Bede deliberately represented the timing of these journeys so that Adomnán, having come to accept the correct Easter in Northumbria, did not celebrate Easter on Iona at the wrong time again. Bede directly ascribed this, rather than any other aspect of Adomnán's actions, to divine grace.<sup>783</sup> Above all else, Bede emphasized Adomnán's new commitment to the Roman Easter and to unity on Iona, and God's endorsement of that, rather than any other facet of his character or actions.

In 685 and 687, Adomnán made two journeys to Aldfrith's court in Northumbria that he himself noted in his *Vita Columbae*.<sup>784</sup> The most straightforward reading of Bede's comment in HE v.15 is that Adomnán made another journey to Northumbria in the final decade of his life, likely in 702 before his death in 704.<sup>785</sup> However, it tends to be asserted that Adomnán only made the two journeys that he himself recorded.<sup>786</sup>

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<sup>783</sup> HE v.15: 'thus by the interposition of divine grace, it came about that a man who greatly loved unity and peace was called to life eternal so that he was not compelled, when Eastertime returned, to have a still graver controversy with those who would not follow him in the truth', *diuina utique gratia disponente, ut uir unitatis ac pacis studiosissimus ante ad uitam raperetur aeternam quam redeunte tempore paschali grauiorem cum eis, qui eum ad ueritatem sequi nolebant, cogeretur habere discordiam*.

<sup>784</sup> Adomnán, *Vita Columbae* II, 46.

<sup>785</sup> The timings of HE v.15 are as follows: Adomnán, sent by his monks on a mission stayed *aliquandiu* (for some time) to see the canonical rites in Northumbria. He converted, returned to Iona where he failed to convince, and went to Ireland, the only temporal signifier is the statement that 'after he had celebrated Easter in Ireland canonically, he returned to his own island', *Hibernia canonico pascha ad suam insulam reuertisset*. Finally, Bede noted 'it happened that before the year was over he had departed from the world', *contigit eum ante expletum anni circulum migrasse de saeculo*. Thus, at its most direct, Bede's account suggests that Adomnán celebrated Easter in 704 in Ireland, before his death in September of that year. Prior to that the implication is that he may have celebrated Easter in Northumbria in 703 at the conclusion of his period observing the canonical rites as performed in Northumbrian churches. If he observed a full liturgical cycle, this would logically place him in Northumbria from spring or summer 702 to 703.

<sup>786</sup> The pair of journeys that Adomnán himself noted is matched by testimony from the Irish annals: the Annals of Ulster (AU) and the Annals of Tigernach (AT) s.a. 687 note that Adomnán brought back sixty former captives to Ireland and AT s.a. 689 notes a further return of captives to Ireland. The absence of a third journey in the annals is used to argue that Bede must be referring to one of the two original journeys. However, the absence of annals evidence for a third journey, particularly if it was not undertaken to free captives, does not seem damning to the prospects of Adomnán having undertaken such a journey. The debate concerning how many journeys Adomnán made to Northumbria is significant because it forms the groundwork for the argument that he converted to the Roman calendar in c. 687, which carries the implication that Adomnán then spent an extended period in exile or that he presided over a divided monastery functioning on two calendars simultaneously. Supporters of his adoption of the Dionysian table c. 687 include Maire Herbert, *Iona, Kells and Derry*, 48-9, and 142;

Ultimately, if, in the details provided in HE v.15, Bede reduced Adomnán's final years, from his journey to Northumbria in 687 to his death in 704, into one brief journey and Easter celebration, then the absence of detail concerning his travel is just one element that focusses attention on his adoption of a different Easter from his Church. The absence of travel details, whilst remarkable by comparison to the signifiers of providence in Arculf's journey, is just one of many absences in Bede's narrative about Adomnán. However, in the more likely scenario that Adomnán did make a third journey, more weight can be given to the relative significance of Arculf and Adomnán travelling. Whilst Bede explicitly praised Adomnán for his avoidance of celebrating Easter on Iona at the wrong time, it is not providential that he travelled, nor that he celebrated Easter in a specific location aided by divine grace. Unlike Arculf's voyage, Adomnán's travel underscores other narrative actions rather than being the focal point of his characterization in Bede's account.

It is worth noting further, that, however many times over the course of his career Adomnán travelled to Northumbria, Bede only offered his audience a view of one journey. In this single journey, Bede manipulated his expression of time and travel to outline Adomnán's commitment to his adoption of the Roman Easter, and to provide

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Thomas M. Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 410; and Clare Stancliffe, "'Charity with Peace': Adomnán and the Easter Question", in *Adomnán of Iona: Theologian, Lawmaker, Peacemaker*, ed. Jonathan M. Wooding (Dublin: Four Courts, 2010), 51-68. By contrast, David Woods has directly argued that Adomnán only adopted the Roman Easter in c.702 on a third journey, see David Woods, "Adomnán, Plague and the Easter Controversy", *Anglo-Saxon England* 40 (2011): 1-13. Thomas O'Loughlin also asserts that Adomnán made three visits to Aldfrith and Northumbria, see *Celtic Theology: Humanity, World, and God in Early Irish Writings* (London: Continuum, 2000), 76; "Adomnán: A Man of Many Parts", in *Adomnán at Birr, AD 697: Essays in Commemoration of the Law of the Innocents*, ed. Thomas O'Loughlin (Dublin: Four Courts, 2001), 41-51, at 46; *Adomnán and the Holy Places*, 4-5. The idea that, further to the two occasions where he secured the release of Irish captives, Adomnán was sent on a third envoy to Northumbria specifically to learn the Roman observation of Easter is entirely plausible. Even late in life Adomnán was a highly mobile individual, in addition to his journeys to Northumbria, he is recorded having travelled to Ireland twice in the 690s, see AU/AT s.a. 692 and again in AU s.a. 697 to promulgate his *Lex Innocentium*.

the framework through which God could be seen to endorse his conversion. In the creation of a single journey to study in Northumbria and to preach and correct practice in Ireland and on Iona, Bede did not give any significance to travel. By minimising the role of movement using neutral travel language, Bede chose not to create significances in his narration of Adomnán's journeys. Instead, Bede praised Adomnán for changing his opinion on Easter on the advice of those 'who were more learned' and for 'modestly explaining the true date of Easter' in Ireland.<sup>787</sup> Bede underplayed Adomnán's character and made no claims of holiness for him; Bede praised his love of unity and peace rather than his sanctity.<sup>788</sup> By contrast, Arculf's journey contained brief narrative references to tropes that honour the divinely appointed nature of his coming to Britain and his authority as eyewitness and presence in the Holy Land.

### 3.2.3. Experiencing a Narrative

Travel experienced through the reading of these texts was multifaceted. Even within three connected chapters in HE, Bede gave mobility textual embodiment as an aid to travel in thought and as allegorically emphasized providential travel. He used narrated travel to provide a deliberately neutral backdrop to another ongoing facet of his narrative arc. This textual diversity of travel highlights that readers' experiences of travel in text are manifold, and consideration of them enhances the interpretation of other narrative elements.

*De Locis Sanctis* engaged with a different devotional landscape from that which was developing in Britain and Ireland. The reality of this landscape and movement around

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<sup>787</sup> HE v.15: *qui erant eruditiores*; and *modesta exhortatione declarans legitimum paschae tempus*.

<sup>788</sup> HE v.15: Adomnán was 'a man who greatly loved unity and peace', *uir unitatis ac pacis studiosissimus*. Rather than with words of sanctity, Bede described Adomnán as 'a good and wise man with an excellent knowledge of the scriptures', *enim uir bonus et sapiens et scientia scripturarum nobilissime instructus*.

it were not significant to either Adomnán or Bede in their conceptualization of the Holy Land. Instead, their texts provided supporting evidence for the textual embodiment and experience of Christ's incarnation re-lived in the furthest reaches of western Christendom. Both presented the geography of the Levant in static terms. This contrasts with their hagiographical expression of saints' movements in Britain and Ireland. In this chapter, the focus has been on the direct juxtaposition of travel around these landscapes in HE v.15-17. However, this thesis as a whole has demonstrated the broader conceptualization of movement in and around Britain and Ireland. This conceptualization distorted past embodiment of travel. It is based on a complexity of ideas recalled and invoked through the symbolic use of travel.

Bede transformed *De Locis Sanctis* when he re-wrote it as DLS, he removed the figure of Arculf from directly interacting with holy sites, and he fashioned the story of Arculf's journey to Adomnán. This journey, tempest strewn and divinely fated, invoked the allegory of the sea; its providential weight emphasized the significance of Arculf's witness to Adomnán and to the English and Irish monks who read DLS. Bede contrasted this journey with his presentation of Adomnán's own travel in old age between Iona, Northumbria, and Ireland. Devoid of travel symbolism, Bede chose to represent Adomnán's movement in reduced neutral language. He accentuated and praised Adomnán for his adoption of the Roman Easter and for his love of unity, which Bede gave providential weight. Within HE v.15, Bede demonstrated the range of uses to which travel could be applied, and, by his inclusion of DLS, he added a further dimension, one that contributed to metaphorical mobility.

The divergence between the way that the Holy Land was experienced through text and the way that regional travel was presented demonstrates the wide difference in the

conception of the two. Bede did not narrate the places of scripture and liturgy within a framework of active travelling, and, as such, he freed the geographical details from the complexity of travel. Contrastingly, allegory and the underlying significance of certain descriptions of travel made regional travel in Britain and Ireland narratively meaningful. In Bede's description of Adomnán, travel is a single element of a broader construct of actions and character that paved the way for the Northumbrian conversion of Iona to the universal Church. When describing travel in Britain and Ireland, Bede narrated his subjects within a framework of meaningful travel. The decision to include certain details or withhold others stemmed from his underlying conceptualization of what travel could mean in narrative. .

Interaction with and experience of the Holy Land through these texts had a different purpose. Both authors reduced the distractions of narrated travel so that they could emphasize the meaning of the spiritual landscape. In Bede and Adomnán's hands, *De Locis Sanctis* creates textual and imaginative experiences of the Holy Land. This contrasts with their hagiographical presentations of local or regional landscapes, which their monastic audience could experience practically as well as textually. For Bede, travel could be meaningful to such an extent that it distracted from other narrative implications. In the example of Adomnán's travel depicted in HE v.15, he minimized the narration of movement so that he could accentuate Adomnán's personal qualities and conversion. Likewise, Bede's diminishment of the person of Arculf within DLS removed the distraction of the individual and his implied movement. This heightened the significance of the reported holy places.



The distinction between Bede and Adomnán is not in the presentation of travel around the Holy Land as neither gave it emphasis, it is in the inclusion of Arculf at each location. For both, the manifestation of Arculf as witness to the Holy Land assumes movement but neither invoked the practice of travel for its reality nor for its symbolism. The continued presence of Arculf in the text of Adomnán's *De Locis Sanctis* meant some travel was referenced. However, Arculf's corporal engagement with the places that had witnessed Christ was important, not his movement to those places. Arculf's importance as eyewitness remained in Bede's DLS. The addition of his providential travel to Britain emphasized the significance of his testimony and witness, and acted as a counter to Bede's removal of his presence at holy sites themselves. The textual Arculf manipulated by both Bede and Adomnán performed the same role as authority and eyewitness. Neither author utilized travel in the Holy Land as a textual tool. In the trajectory of these accounts of *De Locis Sanctis*, travel emphasizes the texts' transmissions. The textual experience of travel explains how they came to be, and emphasizes their authority on Christ's landscape.

### 3.3. Conclusion:

## The Experience of Mobility in Narrated Travel

The early medieval experience of mobility was multifaceted. It ranged from the perambulations of priests through Northumbrian communities, to the attractions of devotional landscapes of cult sites to lay and ecclesiastical travellers; from travel in thought guided by scripture and liturgy, to the familiarity of others' travel in stories run through with allegory, tropes, and reflections of reality. Text and narrative mediate, and the frameworks within which they operate distort, modern scholarly experiences of early medieval mobility. However, there is still a benefit to considering the role, meaning, and utility of travel in early medieval hagiography.

The social fact of mobility sits at the heart of early medieval society.<sup>789</sup> Mobile practices should be understood to have been widely present, and their significance should be interpreted both by scholarship that addresses travel directly and by that which addresses the products of travel. Ideas of fixity should not bind scholarly conceptualizations of the early medieval period. While space, place, and territory are significant themes for investigation, one should not lose sight of the artificial construction of boundedness. Society is the product of movement. This is as true for early medieval Europe as it is for its modern counterpart. The present thesis has

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<sup>789</sup> Mobilities scholarship is as relevant to the medieval period as to modernity, although the scholarly discourse is inevitably framed around different sources, the idea that scholars should not take fixity and boundedness for granted is a strong sentiment for future studies. The diversity of Mobilities as an approach, typified by key works such as Cresswell, *On the Move*, and Cresswell and Merriman, *Geographies of Mobilities*, allows for an early medieval scholarly engagement with Mobilities to sit alongside contrasting examples of movement concerned with a multiplicity of people, spaces, and practices.

demonstrated that movement can be made a central feature of examination and that it is meaningful beyond the action that connects static events. Travel should not just be regarded as its own category of research but as a cohesive and central facet of society.

Travel is inherently meaningful. This thesis has engaged with a range of meanings applied to movement and travel motifs. The conceptualization of travel within the texts considered by this thesis was multi-layered. Mobility does not hold a singular meaning, and the same act of travel can be described and interpreted in different ways, given different significances, and ultimately may denote several ideas. Early medieval embodied travel has been transformed through the various frameworks of narrative, theology, and social meaning. These various layers of meaning provide different strata of access to interpret the experience of the textual traveller.

The theme of mobility encourages the development of scholarship into the connections between travel and other aspects of society. This thesis has particularly examined monastic structures and practices in the light of movement. Travel was an essential part of early medieval monasticism, and monasticism was mobile in many different ways.

### 3.3.1. Mobile Monasticism

Early medieval monasticism was diverse, and practices and doctrines were varied, however, movement was always a feature. It was both a product of and a precursor to monasticism. Rather than a commitment to *stabilitas loci*, the early medieval monk was bound by his vow of obedience.<sup>790</sup> Instead of a commitment to locative fixity, obedience to Christian rules and those atop the monastic hierarchy directed actions and

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<sup>790</sup> Chapter 1.1 and 1.2.

practices towards the service of God, whatever form that might take. Travel itself might be labour for God within a monastic context, when undertaken obediently. Vows of stability and obedience were part of the European movement of monasticism, and that monasticism which developed in Northumbria in the later seventh and eighth centuries prided itself on its knowledge and experience of a wide range of European *regulae*. These attitudes to travel were not formed in Northumbrian isolation; they are indicative of the shape of mobility in monasticism across western Christendom.<sup>791</sup>

Obedience to an abbot or bishop created opportunities for travel as well as for fixity. When an abbot or bishop travelled, monks and clerics from amongst their house likely accompanied them. In the most high-profile cases, Ceolfrith's eighty companions, his earlier presence in Rome accompanying Biscop, and Acca's attendance to Wilfrid's on his third journey to Rome demonstrate this.<sup>792</sup> Within communities with the wealth to go to Rome, there would have been a number of members as widely travelled as their abbot. In cases of regional travel, too, one might expect a monastic retinue to accompany an abbot on the road, and the clerical duties that took priests and bishops into lay communities the length and breadth of Northumbria, to preach and baptize, would have been undertaken in the presence of clerics of multiple ranks. Travelling, on both short and longer distances journeys, was known to monks and clerics through practice as well as from the stories of their founders and abbots.<sup>793</sup>

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<sup>791</sup> It is necessary for further, equivalent, studies to be carried out in other early medieval contexts to prove this assertion. However, whilst not evidence of universal practices, the Northumbrian milieu was as connected to the pulse of western Christendom as any other Christian kingdom.

<sup>792</sup> Respectively, these are HA 16-23 and VCeol 21-35; VCeol 9 and 10; and VW 56, HE iii.13, and v.19 and 20.

<sup>793</sup> Chapter 2.3.

Bede's praise of his founder, Biscop, and the engagement that he made with monastic travel within his own environment in *Hom.* i.13 demonstrates the importance of travel within Bede's own experience of monasticism.<sup>794</sup> For Bede, serving God ought to come before any other desire, in travel as in all other works. Mobility was not inherently at odds with monastic service. Christian life required ritual, regularity, and rules; travel could be a part of that but constant travel made it impossible. Apprehensions about travel seem to relate to the importance of an attachment to communal life; as with solitariness, travelling removed the individual from the rigours and ritual of communal existence, making the soul vulnerable.

In addition to spiritual concerns, Bede was interested in ensuring that enough educated clerics remained in Northumbria to preach, and to keep and improve the faith in the kingdom.<sup>795</sup> Two monastic impulses created problems for him: *peregrinatio* and missionary exertions. These were both positive vocations that demonstrated Northumbrian Christianity had come of age, but they were also two channels by which Northumbria could lose its most talented spiritual sons to other lands and potentially deprive the local church of the energies required to preach effectively within the kingdom. In describing *peregrinatio* in restricted terms, Bede's local focus and Northumbrian-centric interest came to the fore in contrast with the attitudes of other authors.<sup>796</sup> The *peregrinatio* concept could be used to justify travelling widely, as an

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<sup>794</sup> Chapter 1.2.

<sup>795</sup> More and better-trained clergy feature amongst Bede's recommendations for reform in his *Epistola ad Ecgbertum*. The significance of preachers and teachers has been discussed extensively by Alan Thacker, see "Priests and Pastoral Care"; "Monks, Preaching and Pastoral Care"; "Ideal of Reform". See also, DeGregorio, Bede does not address those clerics whose calling took them away from Northumbria, but logically the loss of highly educated and motivated clerics to *peregrinatio* and missionary contexts would have influenced the quality and number of priests available to preach domestically.

<sup>796</sup> Chapter 1.3.

example of travel under God's hand as a spiritual labour ever guided and instructed. An emphasis on the admirable monastic qualities and praiseworthy exertions of those who undertook God's labour abroad, and restrained praise of spending time overseas, can be seen as a reaction to fears over an unwarranted exodus of seekers of permanent alienation in exile.

Early medieval monastic interaction with mobility was not solely concerned with the movement of monks and clerics. During the course of Bede's lifetime, devotional travel was developing as a concept and a practice: journeys to Rome were not the preserve of the monastic elite alone, but also undertaken by lay people, from kings to commoners.<sup>797</sup> Within Northumbria, an interest in devotional travel coincided with the development of shrine complexes at Northumbria's largest and most influential churches and their surrounding landscapes.<sup>798</sup> These mobilities of lay people, as well as the travel of clerics between different churches, indicate that mobile monasticism reflected something of the mobility of society as a whole rather than being set apart from lay peoples' practices.<sup>799</sup>

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<sup>797</sup> HE v.7.

<sup>798</sup> Chapter 3.1 discusses the development of Lindisfarne's devotional landscape. Lindisfarne's approach to visitors did not stand in isolation, for example, Wilfrid has been shown to have created a local devotional landscape at Hexham and Ripon, and this work was continued by Acca. See Stancliffe on Hexham's creation of cult sites in a wider landscape in Clare Stancliffe, "Disputed Episcopacy: Bede, Acca, and the Relationship between Stephen's Life of St Wilfrid and the Early Prose Lives of St Cuthbert", *Anglo-Saxon England* 41 (2012): 7-39.

<sup>799</sup> The appreciation of large-scale of movement in and around the Mediterranean world, outlined, for example, in Horden and Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea*, is beginning to be reflected as a character of medieval past in a other geographical areas, such as in the work carried out by Chris Loveluck in *Northwest Europe*. These large-scale studies that demonstrate the on-going and ever-shifting parameters of travel and communication are important in creating an image and understanding of a medieval world on the move. Mobility would seem to characterize much of medieval history, yet the focus of much recent work on travel has tended to be functionalist and spatial, to consider the practicalities of travel. The present study has sought to change tack and incorporate the intellectual uses and meaning of travel into discussions of the early medieval period.

Christianity is inherently a mobile religion. Metaphors of movement and exile shape a crucial dynamic in the Christian's relationship with God. Monasticism intensified these metaphors, from the ideal of isolation and exile from the secular world to the *peregrinatio* of the soul from the heavenly homeland and the wave-tossed struggles that characterize missionary self-reflection. Early medieval Christianity required and utilized movement in its drive to reach souls, to develop and maintain its significance, and in the creation of a sense of uniformity. The travel of Christians and a specifically Christian form of travel or spiritualization of movement sits at the heart of the representation of mobility within the textual tradition explored in this thesis. Mobility and its denotation reflect both the significance of movement to the Church and to writings about the Church.

### 3.3.2. The Northumbrian Corpus and the Wider World

This thesis has considered Northumbrian approaches to and conceptualization of travel.

It would be unwise to assume any specific conclusion had universal implications because the texts of the Northumbrian corpus are interconnected and emerge from related impulses and circumstances. However, many universal western Christian ideas fed into Northumbrian attitudes. This is particularly the case with the development of monastic principles; Roman and universal authorities informed the core practices and codified *regula* that Bede and his peers connected to, and sought sanction from. The underlying philosophies that structured monastic travel have universal origins, and thus whilst they may be applied in different ways (and certainly in a later period, the development of the Benedictine concept of *stabilitas loci* provides a key example of this) there is a universal component to this rationalization of travel.

Exegetical interpretations of the meaning and role of travel within the Northumbrian corpus do not stand in isolation from wider church traditions. Bede was an influential thinker whose work inspired many theologians who came after him.<sup>800</sup> Likewise, he was indebted to the traditions of the Church Fathers. When it comes to understanding the implications of travel, Northumbrian, or Insular, authors did not isolate themselves from the existing tradition, but took existing ideas and transformed them for their own purposes. One can see this in the development of ideas of *peregrinatio*, from scripture through Augustine to the different concepts maintained and used by Irish, Northumbrian, and missionary authors.<sup>801</sup> Paul wrote of Christians as allegorical *peregrini*, foreigners, living in a foreign land.<sup>802</sup> Augustine developed this allegory so that *peregrinatio* became the spiritual journey to and exile from the heavenly *patria* endured through every Christian's life.<sup>803</sup> These fundamental notions underlie *peregrinatio* as a form of monastic and spiritual expression as practised in the early medieval period. From these initial core ideas, a diversity of regionally, authorially, and contextually devised notions of *peregrinatio* developed.

For all of the wider European parallels, it is Bede's own voice and attitude to travel that is most apparent. Bede himself can be seen with most clarity when his writings directly contrast with that of other authors, although the extensive collection of Bedan exegesis provides a frame for his perceptions that is not present for the rest of the

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<sup>800</sup> In the short term, this included near-contemporaries such as Boniface and his successor Lul, who requested copies of Bede's commentaries for their continental foundation. Bede's reputation to Alcuin and others working in the Carolingian renaissance enshrined him as an authority, placed his exegesis as equal to the Church Fathers' such that they remained popular throughout the medieval period, and ultimately has led to the survival of copies of so many of Bede's works. See, for example, Joyce Hill "Carolingian Perspectives on the Authority of Bede" in *Innovation and Tradition in the Writings of the Venerable Bede*, ed. Scott DeGregorio (Morgantown: West Virginia University Press, 2006), 227-49.

<sup>801</sup> Chapter 1.3.

<sup>802</sup> Hebrews 11:13-14.

<sup>803</sup> As discussed by Claussen, "'Peregrinatio' and 'Peregrini'"; Clark, "Pilgrims and Foreigners".



Northumbrian corpus. The approaches to travel that are apparent from Bede and Stephen's differing narratives of Wilfrid's life demonstrate the divergences between two different authors working within the Northumbrian intellectual environment who personally, and institutionally, had different attitudes to the representation and meaning of travel. When it came to invoking the allegory of the sea, which signifies the turbulent secular world, and God's promise that the sea would be no more, Bede sparsely referenced God's miraculous stilling of the water. In his writing, the allegory is an intensifier for key moments of significant saints's actions.<sup>804</sup> Contrastingly, Stephen chose to invoke the allegory of the sea on each occasion that Wilfrid travelled over water so that the divine providence of each of Wilfrid's actions was evident.

There is a distinctiveness to the Northumbrian corpus, with the exception of Stephen, in its use of sea travel. Sparsely referenced and occasionally providing practical realities, miracles upon the sea invoke the allegory of the sea, adding further emphasis to the role of God and his saints within the promise for the future. Collectively the presentation of the sea bears remarkable similarities across the corpus, compared to the diversity of presentations of the sea and miracles on it in the Hiberno-Latin hagiographies. Likewise, in the presentation of land transport, Northumbrian narratives tended to reserve vehicles for carrying the sick, and to praise saintly priests and bishops for their choice to walk whilst carrying out their clerical duties.<sup>805</sup> These direct presentations of travel, rather than the principles of monastic movement, reflect a distinctive Northumbrian character than can be highlighted by contrast to other

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<sup>804</sup> As discussed in Chapter 2.1, Bede only noted that Aidan and Æthelwald calmed the seas to allow safe passage of others, in HE iii.5 and v.1 respectively, along with the inclusion of Constantius of Lyon's miraculous narrative that Germanus calmed the seas in imitation of Christ. Contrastingly, Stephen indicated that divine grace was involved in safe passage for each of Wilfrid's sailings.

<sup>805</sup> As outlined in Chapter 2.2.

literary traditions. Here the underlying practicalities of travel and its social meanings, as well as a broader conceptualization of travel, play into mobility's depiction in the Northumbrian corpus.

### 3.3.3. Experiencing a Representation of Mobility

Travel was a meaningful narrative tool, sometimes allegorical, sometimes by analogy, or within a learned or creative framework. This thesis has outlined the emphasis that an underlying allegory can add to narratives in the case of the sea, wherein the eschatological threat and promise implied by miracles that still the waters adds weight or divine providence to the narrative of a miracle or action.<sup>806</sup> The meaning of travel is not always allegorical, but the representation of mobility does not simply reflect a reality. Bede placed emphasis on the importance of bishop-saints walking, despite the various suggestions that imply that they would have ridden out of practicality, because it both represented humility and evoked an apostolic paradigm for preaching.<sup>807</sup> Reality and representation collide in the use of vehicles for carrying the sick. A necessity for carrying those who cannot transport themselves, the dramatic revolution from vehicle-bound to walking has resonances with the healing miracles in the gospels and provides a clear theatrical moment of transformation and testimony.<sup>808</sup>

Travel and specific journeys, as well as engaging this framework of meanings, are narrated with specific purposes derived by the authors and construed by their audiences. This thesis has explored the specific example of long distance journeys to Rome, which demonstrates the multifaceted intents given to different features of a narrated

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<sup>806</sup> Chapter 2.1.

<sup>807</sup> Chapter 2.2.2.

<sup>808</sup> Chapter 2.2.3. The healing of an unnamed girl, narrated in HE iii.9, best epitomizes the implications of vehicles; the theatricality of the description of her performative piety and ability to walk following the dramatic miracle demonstrate some of the simple underlying visual and associative connotations of travel acts that were meaningful across Northumbria at the time.

journey.<sup>809</sup> The religious and political natures of the texts should be engaged with to identify the significance that was given to naming features in the landscape of a given journey. An audience's expectations of this narrative type and their awareness of certain locations ahead of others is likewise notable. Finally, the creation of a sense of Rome as closer and innately connected to the Northumbrian audience of these texts lends credence to the shrinking of narrative length and distance. Travel could be used as a narrative device to emphasize or silence another feature of hagiography, whether a specific event or action, or a theme or characterization.<sup>810</sup>

The experience of mobility draws together hagiographical protagonist and audience. The high levels of mobility found in early medieval monasticism mean that these texts' primary audiences had themselves experienced travel and could use that, perhaps more local, movement to engage with the actions and experiences of their hagiographical subjects. As Bede presented Biscop as a specific example of a monk who travelled in his *Hom.* i.13, so too might we see indications of personal specific experiences of travel transmitted through analogies to the general experiences of an audience. Most explicitly, Hygeburg's detailed narrative of the crossing from Hamwic to Rouen and the shared familiarity of that journey that she, and her audience, had with her subject Willibald would have smoothed the imaginative joining of their experience of his more alien travel on to the Holy Land.<sup>811</sup> The dynamic concerning the textual experience of the Holy Land pulls at more than just a familiarity of actions and co-joining of presence,

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<sup>809</sup> Chapter 2.3.1.

<sup>810</sup> This might be seen in the example of Adomnán's under-narrated travel and the corresponding emphasis on his adoption of the Roman Easter as was discussed in Chapter 3.2.

<sup>811</sup> See in particular Chapter 2.3.2.

as the testimony of an expert witness contributed to understanding the holy places and benefited scriptural study and liturgical immersion.<sup>812</sup>

Although not focussed on the systems and functions of mobility, this thesis has brought certain realities of travel to the fore. In addition to the widespread mobility of early medieval monasticism, the present illumination of the textual use of movement has created a heightened sense of early medieval society as active and mobile. This influences a number of different lines of investigation. If one thinks of travel as more prevalent, then one has to think about a society in which people moved and communicated as a matter of course. One also has to re-evaluate what it means for society and Christianity that travel was celebrated as a labour for God, not ignored and overlooked. Scholarship ought to be more open to people moving. Movement was both documented and unrecorded; sometimes it was imbued with meaning, at others it was disremembered from a constructed narrative. All travel is evocative, and its connotations are multifaceted.

From a perspective that accepts and expects mobility, seemingly static topics can be explored and questioned within a Mobilities framework. For example, the examination of holy places in the light of the narrated movement to and around fixed places highlights a social and ritual role for travelling.<sup>813</sup> Movement embodied and transformed place; this is seen the mechanisms that developed to accommodate and welcome devotional travellers. Fundamental principles of mobility interact with and influenced all facets of society, and as such are a valuable subject of study in their own right and as a facet of other social themes.

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<sup>812</sup> Chapter 3.2.

<sup>813</sup> Chapter 3.1.

Travel matters because it lies beneath so many other actions. So much of history, from the narration of events to intellectual trajectories, assumes the presence of movement or fixity and relies on the effects of its practice. This thesis has shown that travel cannot be ignored – its narration and absence, and its very practice sit within various systems of meaning and contribute to the greater sum of narrated events as well as to the specific understanding of social and monastic behaviours. Mobilities as an approach seeks to highlight travel and movement away from a functionalist framework that focusses upon travel infrastructure. In light of this, the present thesis has taken the study of early medieval travel away from the practicalities of roadways, routes, and retinues to consider the meaning of movement. By shedding the constraints of spatiality and functionality, it is possible to engage with and experience travel and its implications as presented by medieval authors. Textual embodiment of mobility is rich and dynamic, and this thesis has demonstrated its integration within, and importance to, a wide range of themes. Travel's real significance is drawn from its interaction with all other facets of human activity, and, as such, mobility is meaningful and deserves attention for its own sake and in combination with all areas of medieval social reality and scholarship.

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